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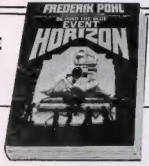
Frederik Pohl



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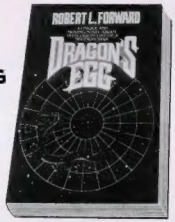
Robert L. Forward



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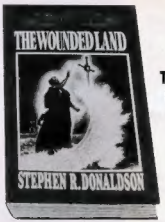

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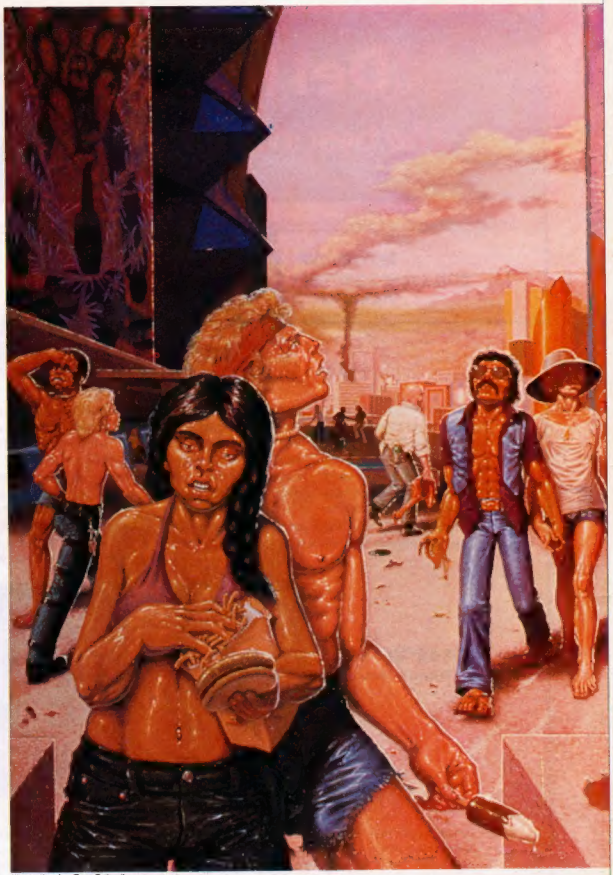

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...THIRTY-EIGHT...

When the folks at *National Lampoon* decided to take a big chance on launching an American edition of the French magazine ***Metal Hurlant***, nobody knew how well it would do, or how big a chance was being taken.

That was three years ago, and it turned out that ***Heavy Metal*** was an immediate success. But despite the gratification that gave us, ***HM*** has occupied a lonely spot on the nation's newsstands ever since. ("What kinda magazine is that? ***Heavy Metal***, did you say? Rock 'n' roll or something?") And we've had our problems trying to explain to some people what ***HM*** is all about. ("Comics? Comics're fer ***kids***!") People are a lot happier with categories; categories that they can understand. Being the only "adult comic book" on the stands can be a proud and lonely thing.

We're a little less lonely now.

The people over at Marvel who revolutionized "kid's comics" almost twenty years ago (has it been that long since the Fantastic Four and Spidey made their debuts? Yes, nearly...) have launched a new magazine in "the ***Heavy Metal*** category" called *Epic Illustrated*.

No postmortems here. The people who put together *Epic* had their own unique problems to deal with, their own taste to follow. Rather, an outstreched hand in welcome. Glad to have some company; good to see another "adult comic book" on the stands.

Epic will have its problems—its quarterly publishing schedule is probably the biggest—but we wish it luck and success. It's a big world and there is surely room for both *Epic* and ***HM*** here.

And *Epic* will keep us on our toes. Just knowing that we've got some real competition will give us that extra little nudge that can keep complacency at bay.

So, Stan and Archie and the whole gang over at *Epic Illustrated*, keep 'em coming!

—Ted White

Ted White

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COMIX

Illustration by Dan Steffan

Jay Kinney

Underground Comix
Part Four: **Some Overview**

In this column over the last several issues I've written quite a lot about the early history of underground comix without touching too much on the comics' general philosophy. This has been in part because it is easy to get swept along in a torrent of names, dates, titles, and gossip, losing sight of the works in question. It is also due to the fact that discussing the UGs and their significance (if any) requires tackling their place in the world of popular art, which is no easy task.

However, this seems a good time to try to make some sense out of it all, to inject some overview, if you will, by discussing why I think the UGs have been some of the most intriguing (and underrated) comic art of the past several decades. Not only have they survived the dissolution of their original countercultural audience but they also helped to create a more sophisticated approach to comic art, resulting in publications such as *Heavy Metal*.

These days comics seem to be an embattled art form. One need only pick up the Sunday funnies or a superhero comic to note that the space allotted to the strips is shrinking, the reproduction quality is falling, and the strips themselves, more often than not, fail to provoke either laughter or excitement.

Needless to say, this was not always the case. When newspaper comics developed at the turn of the century, print was still the reigning medium and comics were a great circulation builder for the papers that featured them proudly. As the first and second generations of cartoonists developed through the thirties they had giant sixteen-by-twenty-inch pages as canvasses for their Sunday strips —lavish space without which classics such as "Little Nemo," "Prince Valiant," or "The Kin-der-Kids" would have been unthinkable. Even the daily strips of the era were twice the size of today's miserably cramped descendants.

The grand old men of comic strips, the Tads, the Goldbergs, the Herrimans, the DeBecks, etc., had all been solo performers. They did all the tasks themselves (or sometimes with an assistant): the writing, drawing, lettering, and coloring. The sum total had a strong personal stamp that packed a wallop.

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MUZICK

Lou Stathis

A monster lurks in the shadows. You can just about see its vague form against the dark background of the night. It's obscenely fat, and it waits, squatting back on its haunches like a carnivorous sumo wrestler looking for some chicken necks to rip apart with his teeth. Slowly, it moves through the sooty mist, breathing shallowly and leaving bucket-sized clumps of McQueenian slime in its wake. It is putrefaction personified and disease on two legs . . .something so evil, so sick and disgusting, that it can make even the most hardened New York City subway rider fall to his knees and scream to be put out of his misery.

Sometimes, I get this strange feeling that my mind is not my own. It's as though some inhuman fiend is using my pitiful body as a tool, a twitching receptacle through which an unending stream of manic gibberish is channeled. All I can do is watch with impotent horror as this invisible beast manipulates my fingers, and pages of baboonish babble ap-

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FLIX

Illustration by Jerry Tinkli

Bhob

When I gave a freshly minted copy of *Heavy Metal* to Jerzy Skolimowski, the Polish director of *The Shout* (1978), he said, "Good! I will have something to read on the airplane." I smiled at the sudden mental projection: this brilliant visionary of the unpredictable aspects of contemporary existence whisperjetting over continents and thirty-five thousand feet high on Moebius,

continued on page 78

SF

Steve Brown

For a long time now I have railed against Hollywood's pathetic attempts to put SF onto film. The shoddy excuses we have had for SF films are a major factor in the popular misconception of SF as a basically trivial form of adolescent escapism. And yet, the detailed richness of the best of written SF has vast potential for successful transformation to the screen. I can only think of three SF movies that come even close to the power and substance of their written works: *The Incredible Shrinking Man*, *Alien*, and *2001*, and all of them (the pretentious ambiguities of the latter notwithstanding) are of the most basic action-escapist variety.

In mid January PBS aired a production of *The Lathe of Heaven* by Ursula Le Guin. *Lathe* is far from Le Guin's most popular book (I know staunch Le Guin fans who actively hate it), and it is perhaps her most atypical work. Yet it has always been one of my personal favorites. When I first heard of the film my eager anticipation was unbounded. At last! A movie that would show *Star Wars* fans just what an SF movie could be. The filmmakers even respected and listened to the author. Le Guin oversaw the production and was listed in the credits as the creative consultant.

The Lathe of Heaven is about a passive man named George Orr who has the power to dream "effectively"; that is, his dreams come true retroactively. He dreamt that an aunt had been killed in an accident six months earlier, and when he awoke, it had actually happened. The aunt had died long ago, and everyone's memories of her were changed except for Orr's. Orr has a power beyond anyone's imagination. He can literally change the face of the earth, lift mountain ranges, turn deserts into seas, or rearrange any (or all) of history. But Orr wants only to be rid of his power and is soon enmeshed in the designs of a megalomaniac psychiatrist named Dr. Haber. Haber realizes

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SIDEBAR

Illustration by John Workman

DIVINING AT THE EDGE

by Barry Malzberg

Occasionally, in my role of community participant, and less frequently in that of a moderately well-known science fiction writer, I speak to classes in the high school of my New Jersey suburb. After a fifteen minute (at the most) set piece on the joys and perils of the Writing Life, I throw the floor open to questions. "What do you think of *Star Wars*?" "What do you think of *Stranger in a Strange Land*?" "Is Asimov your favorite science fiction author?" "Do you know him?" "What was the meaning of the ending of *2001*?" "Did you like 'Twilight Zone'?" "What about Ray Bradbury?"

Well, what about him? Ray Bradbury has not appeared with a story in a science fiction magazine for seventeen years or published a new book in close to twenty. I don't think too much of *Stranger in a Strange Land* or *Star Wars* (Edmond Hamilton thought up the latter almost alone forty years ago). The ending of *2001* is metaphysical, not science fiction, and Asimov is a splendid, ebullient fellow. So what? Is that all that the general public—as represented at least in the high schools—thinks of science fiction? A couple

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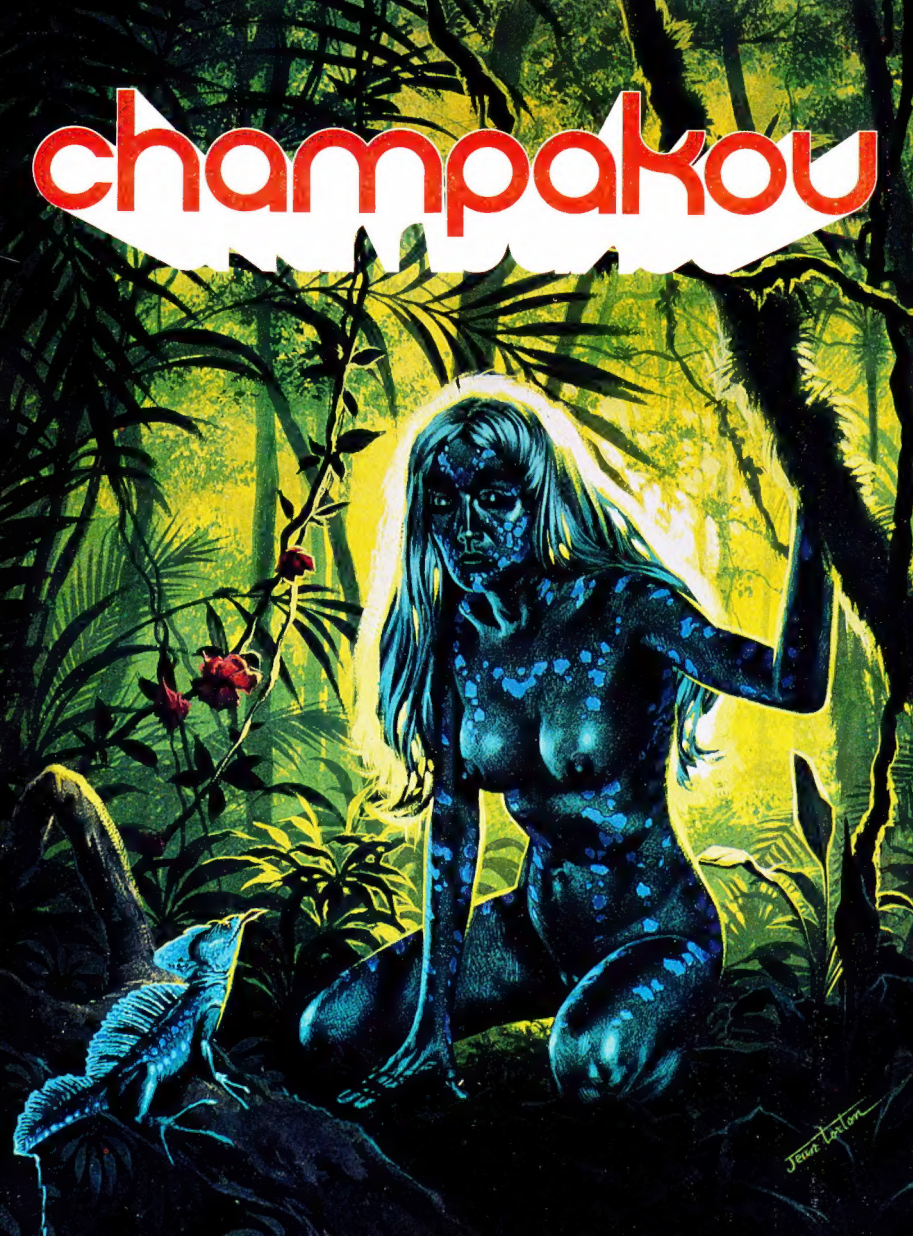
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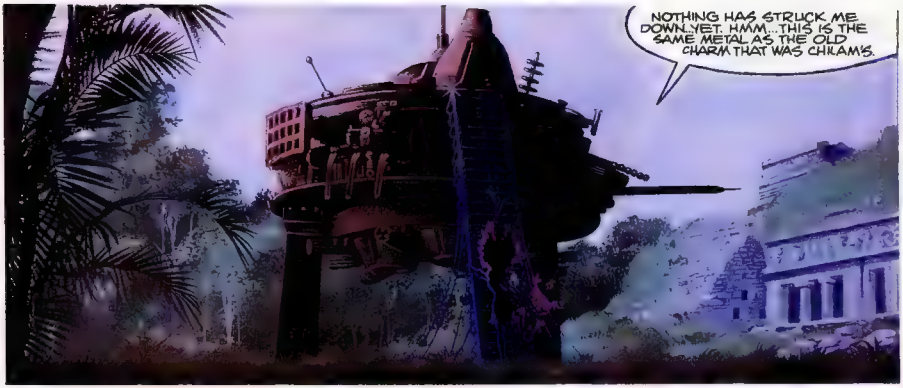
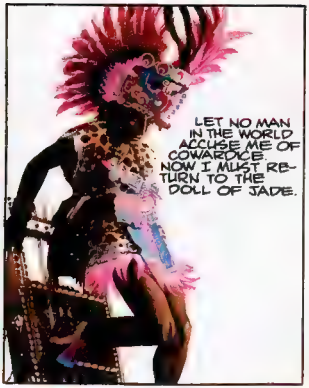

NOTHING HAS STRUCK ME DOWN...YET. HMM...THIS IS THE SAME METAL AS THE OLD CHARM THAT WAS CHILAM'S.

I MUST HAVE COURAGE! I MUST FOLLOW MY CURIOSITY ALL THE WAY!

BUT THERE IS NO ONE! THE GOD WHO BROUGHT THE CELESTIAL SHIP HERE HAS DISAPPEARED, OR IS INVISIBLE.



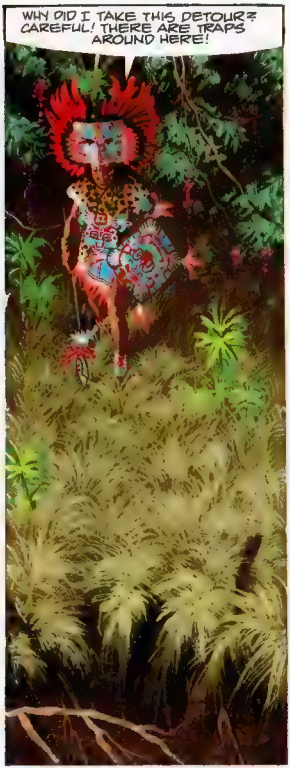
AT THE SAME MOMENT, NOT FAR AWAY, A BIG GAME TRAP HAS JUST BEEN TRIGGERED BY AN UNUSUAL VICTIM.

I'M WOUNDED... AND MY TRIGAM... MY DEFENSE... I DROPPED IT WHEN I FELL... IT STAYED ON THE RIM OF THIS PIT...

RROOAAR

ROOO OR
AN ARM!! A FLESH-EATER OF THIS WORLD. HE MUST SMELL MY BLOOD! HE IS DANGEROUS!
IF HE GETS ANY CLOSER TO THE EDGE, HE'LL FALL!

MIMESIS! QUICK!
MY SUBTERFUGE WILL NOT IMPRESS HIM FOR LONG... I HAVE TO FIND SOMETHING ELSE. WAIT! I... I FEEL A PRESENCE... THE PRESENCE OF A VERTICAL BEING... PERHAPS I AM SAVED!


WHY DID I TAKE THIS DETOUR? CAREFUL! THERE ARE TRAPS AROUND HERE!

ONE OF THEM HAS BEEN SET OFF.
RRRORR!

OOH?!

DON'T BE AFRAID, MAN! I'M NOT YOUR ENEMY... AND THIS ANIMAL IS GOING TO KILL ME. PLEASE! YOU MUST SAVE ME!

TAKE MY TRIGAM, THAT BRILLIANT OBJECT THAT IS LYING AT YOUR FEET! QUICK! I'VE HAD NO PROTECTION UNTIL NOW!

WHAT'S HAPPENING? THE VOICE OF THIS...CREATURE...IS TALKING IN MY HEAD...

I MUST DO WHAT SHE SAYS. IF I DON'T, THE LADY WHO CHANGES HER SKIN WILL BE DEVOURED.

DIRECT THAT ARM TOWARD THE THING THAT WANTS TO HURT ME AND PRESS ON THE RED BALL.

AAAH! THE FIRE OF HEAVEN HAS ANNIHILATED THE JAGUAR!

*OURAKAN: THE MAYAN GOD OF THE STORM.

HER SKIN IS BLUE, BUT HER BLOOD IS RED LIKE MINE. THEN I WILL MAKE HER A POULTICE OF PLANTS TO STOP THE HEMORRHAGING AND PREVENT POSSIBLE INFECTION.

WHO ARE YOU, MAN?
DON'T MOVE, LADY OF HEAVEN! YOU HAVE LOST A LOT OF BLOOD! I AM CHAMPAKOU, STUDENT OF THE GREAT CHILAM. I WILL CARE FOR YOU AND CURE YOUR WOUND.

CHILAM!? CHILAM OF SAYATAL IS YOUR MASTER?

YES! BUT HIS TIME ON EARTH HAS ENDED. YOU MUST KNOW IT, YOU WHO COME FROM THE STARS... HAS HE JOINED YOU? YOU... THE CREATURES OF HEAVEN AND SUN?

WHERE I COME FROM, EVEN DEAD MEN DON'T GO. POOR CHILAM! SO I'VE DELAYED TOO LONG?.. BUT DO YOU SEE, WHERE I COME FROM, TIME IS SO DIFFERENT FROM HERE.
YOU MEAN THAT THERE ARE NO SEASONS? AND THAT ONE DOESN'T AGE THERE LIKE ON THE DRAGON OF THE EARTH? BUT WHERE DO YOU COME FROM THEN, BEAUTIFUL MAGICIAN?
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW ALL THAT? DO YOU ALSO WANT TO CURE ME OF MY WOUNDS?
YES! I DO!

IF THE BLUE OF MY SKIN DOESN'T REPULSE YOU, IF YOU FIND ME BEAUTIFUL AND IF YOU WANT ME, COME MAKE LOVE TO ME.

NOW LOOK AT MY WOUND.
BUT!? IT'S ALMOST GONE!
YOUR SEED ALLOWED ME TO RE-GENERATE MY TISSUES RAPIDLY ONCE AGAIN AND NOT EVEN A TRACE WILL BE LEFT.
I'M VERY TIRED.
THAT'S NORMAL. YOU'RE GOING TO REST AND I'M GOING TO LOOK FOR SOMETHING TO EAT. YOU MUST BE RAVENOUS.

A FEW MOMENTS LATER...
HOW HUNGRY I WAS! I FEEL BETTER NOW!
I FOUND THESE FOODS IN A GARDEN OF SAYATAL. MY POWER TO CHANGE THE COLOR OF MY SKIN MAKES ME, SO TO SPEAK, INVISIBLE TO YOUR EYES.
AND YOU CAN TAKE ON ALL THE COLORS YOU WANT?
MORE THAN THAT! LIKE THIS I MOVE AT NIGHT! NOTHING CAN BETRAY MY PRESENCE!
OOH?!
HERE I AM AT THE HEART OF THE FOREST.
AND HERE, A DANGEROUS ANIMAL FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY...
HERE ARE THE COLORS OF THE REPTILE...

HERE'S ANOTHER...
AND HERE I AM LIKE THE SEA. SEA CREATURES THEMSELVES ARE FOOLED.
THE SUN SETS AND EVERYTHING BECOMES RED AROUND ME.
DO YOU LIKE THAT?
IT'S EXTRAORDINARY! DANGER, THEN, CAN MAKE YOU TAKE ON ALL THE ASPECTS OF NATURE?

PLEASURE ALSO... DO YOU WANT ME A WOMAN OF YOUR PEOPLE?
DO YOU, PERHAPS, PREFER ME LIKE THIS?..
...OR LIKE THIS?.. THE WHIMSICAL POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS, YOU KNOW.
HERE I AM A STATUE OF FINE STONE:-DO YOU LIKE IT? WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ME?...SO LET ME MAKE...

MY.. LOVE... IT WAS... EXTRAORDINARY.. INCREDIBLE!.. WE, THE MEN OF THE EARTH, HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE WORLD IS ONLY A GREAT SNAKE, AN IMMENSE DRAGON WHO SLEEPS FROM THE BEGINNING. SOMETIMES HE WAKES UP, AND THE EARTH TREMBLES, AND THE SCALES OF THE MONSTER CHANGE... IT'S NOT LIKE THAT, THEN? MY MASTER-HE SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND THAT EVERYTHING IS ONLY SPHERES... CERTAIN OF WHICH ARE INHABITED BY ALL SORTS OF CREATURES... THAT'S WHAT CHILAM TALKED TO ME ABOUT ONCE...
YOU WILL KNOW EVEN MORE IF YOU SPEND MORE TIME WITH ME.
BUT WHY AM I WITHOUT STRENGTH EACH TIME WE HAVE LOVED? AND THEN, I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE DOLL OF JADE... AND MY BROTHERS... I WOULD LIKE TO KEEP YOU CLOSE TO ME, TOO... LOVE WITH YOU IS SO DIFFERENT... SO BEAUTIFUL... I LOVE YOU... I LOVE YOU, LADY OF HEAVEN...

TO BE CONTINUED..

SHAME ON YOU!

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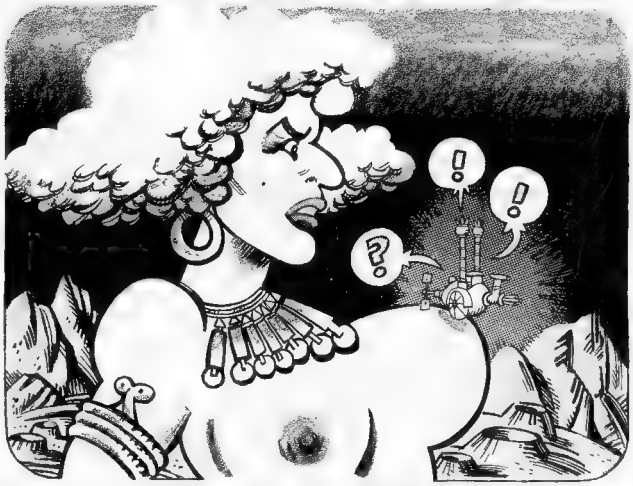
CHAPTER FOUR: SOME SURPRISES

BEHOLD, READER, THE DAUNTLESS LITTLE *CHESTER ALAN ARTHUR* HAD DESCENDED UPON THE **MOON** FAIRLY ENOUGH-- HOWEVER, THE SPUNKY, STEAM-DRIVEN CRAFT RESTED PRECARIOUSLY UPON THE LACTEAL FAUCET OF A **GIANT WOMAN,** TO WHOM THE *ARTHUR* AND HER CREW WERE NO GREATER IN SCALE THAN THE COMMON BOAR WASP, PEACOCK LEECH, OR MUSK APHID!

WHAT A SITUATION!

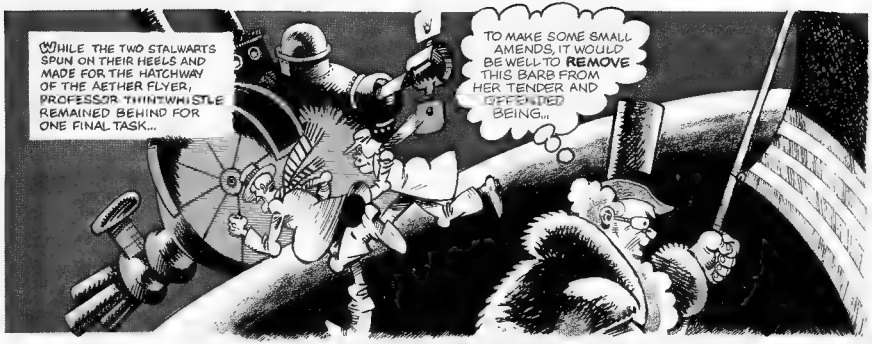
AND NOW ON WITH OUR STORY...

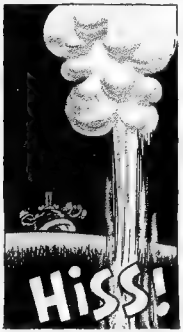


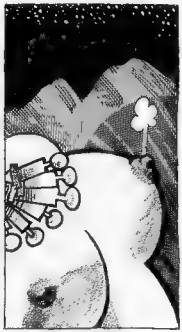
BY STEVE STILES & DICK LUPOFF

NOW LADS, WE SEEM TO HAVE LANDED IN AN **INOPPORTUNE LOCALE**...
I THINK WE WOULD BE WISE TO, AHEM, **"PULL UP STAKES"** IF I MAY BE PERMITTED A TENSION RELIEVING **WITTICISM.**

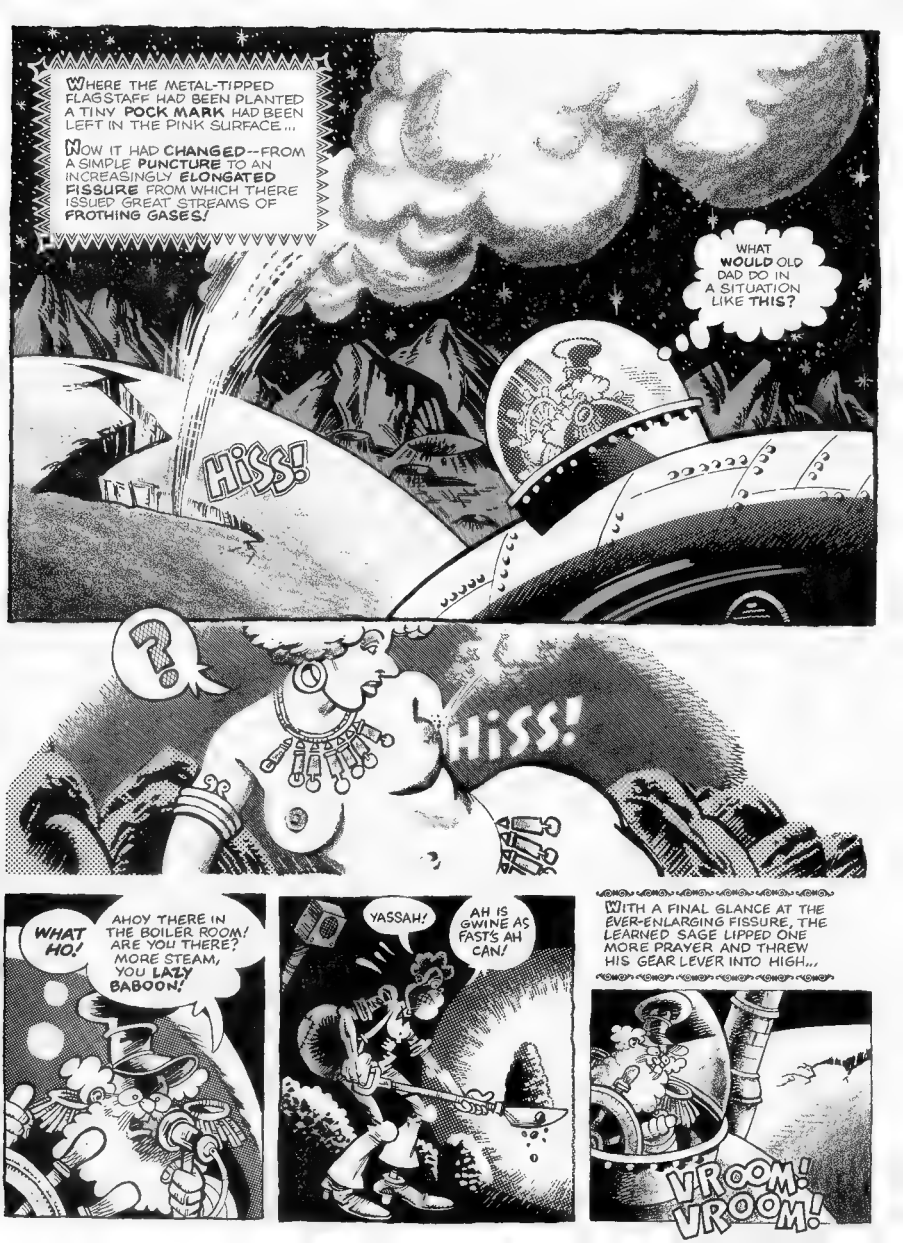
B-BUT, BUT PROFESSOR, WE JUST GOT HERE! MUST WE LEAVE SO PRECIPITOUSLY?
LAD, LAD! KNOW YOU NOT THAT I WISH AS FERVENTLY AS YOU TO EXPLORE THE MOON? BUT WE HAVE LANDED UPON... UPON...
YES, SIR, UPON... WHAT?
...SIR?
THE WHILE THIS CONVERSATION WAS TAKING PLACE, THE PINK "GROUND" UPON WHICH THE THREE EARTHLY VISITORS STOOD GAVE EVIDENCE OF UNDULATIONS OF UNCOMMON VIGOR...
?
WHAT IS BEFALLING US?
OH MAH GOD!
NO TIME TO BANDY WORDS, GENTLEMEN...
QUICKLY, BACK TO THE SHIP!

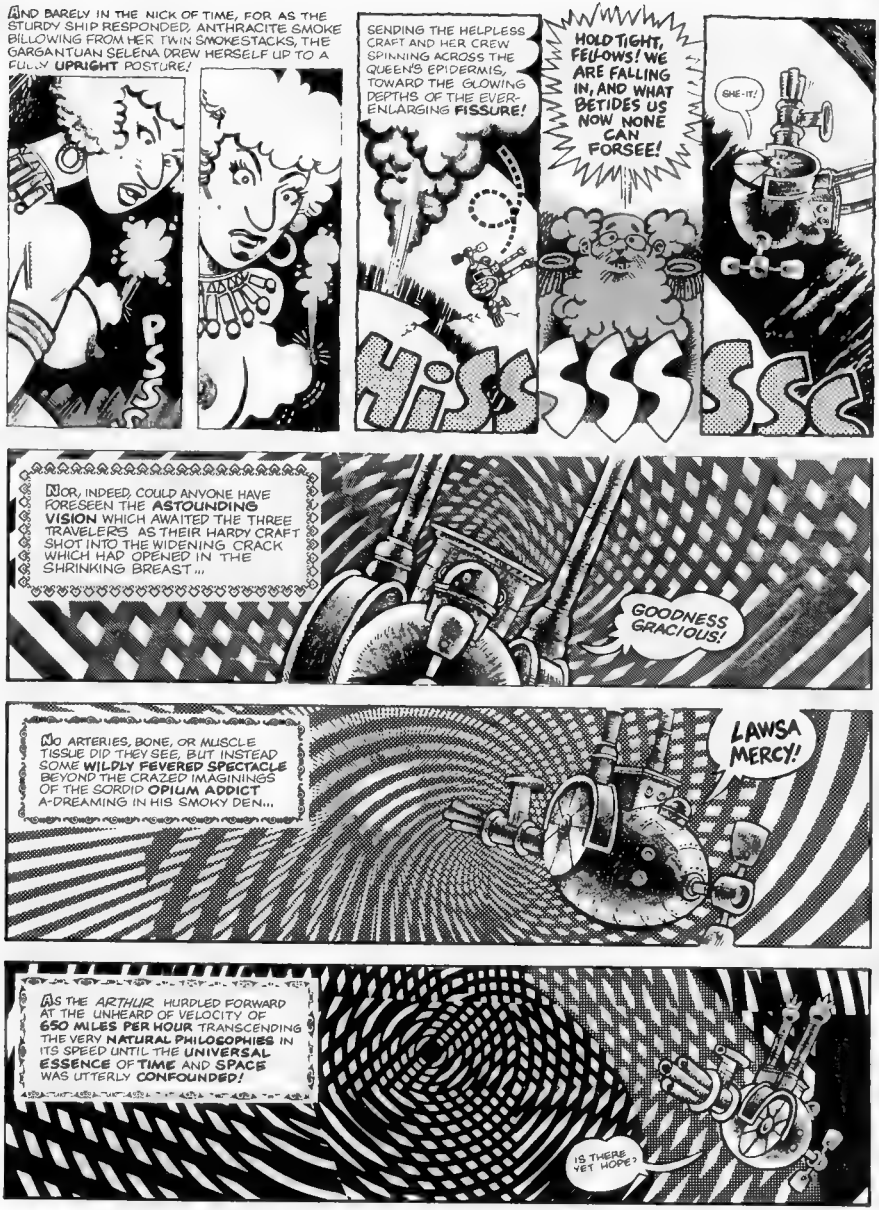

WHILE THE TWO STALWARTS SPUN ON THEIR HEELS AND MADE FOR THE HATCHWAY OF THE AETHER FLYER, PROFESSOR TWINTWHISTLE REMAINED BEHIND FOR ONE FINAL TASK...
TO MAKE SOME SMALL AMENDS, IT WOULD BE WELL TO REMOVE THIS BARB FROM HER TENDER AND OFFENDED BEING...





WITH A JOLT AND A LURCH, BLACK ANTHRACITE BILLOWING FROM HER TWIN SMOKESTACKS AND GASLIGHT PROVIDING A GHOSTLY ILLUMINATION TO HER DARKENED CABINS, THE *ARTHUR* BEGAN TO CREEP FORWARD ACROSS THE PINK, CREAMY EPIDERMIS OF SELENA, QUEEN OF THE MOON!

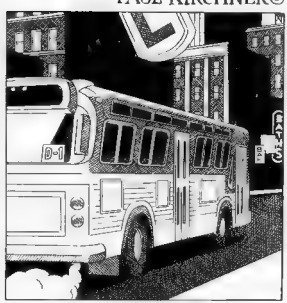

WHERE THE METAL-TIPPED FLAGSTAFF HAD BEEN PLANTED A TINY POCK MARK HAD BEEN LEFT IN THE PINK SURFACE...
NOW IT HAD CHANGED--FROM A SIMPLE PUNCTURE TO AN INCREASINGLY ELONGATED FISSURE FROM WHICH THERE ISSUED GREAT STREAMS OF FROTHING GASES!
WHAT WOULD OLD DAD DO IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS?
HISS!
?
HISS!
WHAT HO!
AHOY THERE IN THE BOILER ROOM! ARE YOU THERE? MORE STEAM, YOU LAZY BABOON!
YASSAH!
AH IS GWINE AS FASTS AH CAN!
WITH A FINAL GLANCE AT THE EVER-ENLARGING FISSURE, THE LEARNED SAGE LIPPED ONE MORE PRAYER AND THREW HIS GEAR LEVER INTO HIGH...
VROOM! VROOM!


AND BARELY IN THE NICK OF TIME, FOR AS THE STURDY SHIP RESPONDED, ANTHRACITE SMOKE BILLOWING FROM HER TWIN SMOKESTACKS, THE GARGANTUAN SELENA DREW HERSELF UP TO A FULLY UPRIGHT POSTURE!
PSSS
SENDING THE HELPLESS CRAFT AND HER CREW SPINNING ACROSS THE QUEEN'S EPIDERMIS, TOWARD THE GLOWING DEPTHS OF THE EVER-ENLARGING FISSURE!
HOLD TIGHT, FELLOWS! WE ARE FALLING IN, AND WHAT BETIDES US NOW NONE CAN FORSEE!
HISSSSSSSS
GHE-IT!
NOR, INDEED, COULD ANYONE HAVE FORESEEN THE ASTOUNDING VISION WHICH AWAITED THE THREE TRAVELERS AS THEIR HARDY CRAFT SHOT INTO THE WIDENING CRACK WHICH HAD OPENED IN THE SHRINKING BREAST ...
GOODNESS GRACIOUS!
NO ARTERIES, BONE, OR MUSCLE TISSUE DID THEY SEE, BUT INSTEAD SOME WILDLY FEVERED SPECTACLE BEYOND THE CRAZED IMAGININGS OF THE SORDID OPIUM ADDICT A-DREAMING IN HIS SMOKY DEN...
LAWSA MERCY!
AS THE ARTHUR HURDLED FORWARD AT THE UNHEARD OF VELOCITY OF 650 MILES PER HOUR TRANSCENDING THE VERY NATURAL PHILOSOPHIES IN ITS SPEED UNTIL THE UNIVERSAL ESSENCE OF TIME AND SPACE WAS UTTERLY CONFOUNDED!
IS THERE YET HOPE?

POP!
OH, PROFESSOR! MY SENSES EXPIRE! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS STATE IN WHICH WE FIND OURSELVES?
LAWSY, LAWSY! AH SHO AM SKEERED!
FEETS DO YO' DUTY.'
HOLD, JEFFERSON!
THERE IS NO PLACE THAT YOUR "FEETS" CAN CARRY YOU NOW..
...WHAT WONDERS WE WILL BEHOLD AND WHAT PERILS WE WILL FACE WE CAN BUT GUESS...
...BUT IN THE MEANTIME, THERE IS NAUGHT TO BE GAINED BY GIVING WAY TO HYSTERICS...
LADS, I MUST URGE YOU TO BUCK UP AND HOLD ON TO YOUR COURAGE! LET US REMEMBER THAT WE ARE CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES!
WE ARE IN NO IMMEDIATE DANGER! IN THE MEANTIME, ALL THAT IS REQUIRED IS SOME DILIGENT PERSEVERENCE AND CONFIDENCE IN A DIVINE PROVIDENCE!
TO BE CONTINUED!

the bus

PAUL KIRCHNER©



MUZICK by Lou Stathis

continued from page 4

pear in my typewriter. It comes in from nowhere, like a Francis Ford Coppola helicopter attack, kicking me aside and seizing the controls with a supremely brutal arrogance. "Stand back, shriveling intellectual wimp—it's time for a *real* man to take the wheel!" I don't stand a chance.

This time I think I've managed to keep the bastard out, thanks to much teeth-grinding and superior sphincter control. I'm fed up with being a stooge for some drooling, subhuman geek. That telltale tingling in my medulla seems to have gone for the moment, but fighting it off has put me in a weakened, pathetic condition, and definitely not up to grappling with the dark side of the technorok juggernaut, as was promised in last month's wrap-up (that was *him* talking, anyway). Listening to that stuff in my present state sends me running for the spikes of Thorazine (I wanna be sedated) and pleading for the comfort of my mother's bosom. But that toadfucker actually *likes* the stuff—taps his clawed toes to Throbbing Gristle and hums along with Suicide. But this month *I'm* wearing the pants in this column, and what I say, goes. Got that, porkface?

All right. Lots of hot platters on the gramophone this month. The stream of endearingly off-the-wall singles only touched upon last month has continued unabated, many of them electronic, and each more demented than the last. Thanks to massive radio play, "Computer Games" by Mi-Sex has been picked up by Epic in the USA and is now generally available at domestic prices. There is also a twelve-inch single version of the song with "Graffiti Crimes" on the B side, a much better song than the original backside occupant. You can expect to see an album soon. I've also been corrected as to the band's origin—they're New Zealanders, not Aussies (Enzers consider being called Aussies an insult, I've discovered; almost as bad as calling an Irishman English), and that makes them only the second band that I'm aware of to emerge from that island universe — Split Enz, of course, is the other—both hopelessly warped. It kind of makes you wonder what goes on down there.

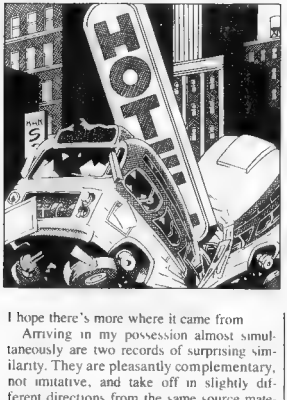
Two recent acquisitions of note come from Mute Records in London (16 Decoy Avenue, London NW 11, UK), the label that brought us such pioneering electrotunesmiths as the Normal and the Silicon Teens. The first is Fad Gadget, a 1979 release and apparently the second single issued on Mute (between the Norm and the Teens), but only recently available in this less enlightened part of the world. Fad Gadget is a guy named Frank Tovey (another one-man act, like Daniel Miller's Normal) who plays the usual nifty gizmos (or fad gadgets, if you prefer) and sings. The songs, "Back to Nature" on the A side and "The Box" on the flip, are both powerful, gloomy exercises that occupy a territory somewhere between Miller's manic minimalism and the Teens' aggressively optimistic electropop. "Nature" shares more than its name with the Magazine song from *Secondhand Daylight*—listen to the slow opening section of the latter—and additionally there is a general similarity in tone between this single and much of Howard Devoto's muzick. It's there in the slow, brooding bass lines and the ominous, counterpointed synthesizer melodies. Tovey's lyrics are somewhat more transparent than Devoto's, attacking directly the ironies of the title in a postapocalyptic context. The song is a bit humorless, in a corrosive Teutonic sort of way, but chillingly effective and quite listenable. "The Box" works in a similar vein with its buzzingly abrasive synthesizers and an insidiously slow tempo. The vocals here have an Eno "Third Uncle" phrasing and intonation, demanding and pleading for release. It complements the first side quite nicely and is certainly worth acquiring.

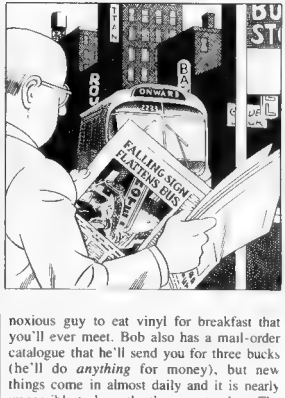
The other new Mute platter is the second Silicon Teens single, and, like their first, it is an authentic electronic rendition of an old top-forty song. "Judy in Disguise" was a good-sized hit in, I think, 1967 for John Fred and his Playboy Band, and the Teens whip up a bouncy, danceable cover of the song, right down to the wonderfully chintzy Farfisa organ break. The B side, "Chip 'n Roll," is in the Tornadoes tradition (remember "Telstar" from 1962?), a bubbling-synthi instrumental built on a simple riff, suitable for dancing or just hopping around your teenage bedroom. It is quintessential pop muzick, infectious and irresistibly likable, but devoid of any profound statements about our socio-political situation and the meaning of life in our crumbling postindustrial society.

Other worthwhile additions to your singles box are "Wake Up!" by Home Service (227 Mount Pleasant Road, London N 17, UK), a three-song single on the Crystal Groove label. The A tune is a catchy, synthesizer-fueled pop song that, lyrically, can be looked at as a wholesome rewrite of Ian Dury's "Wake Up and Make Love to Me." There's a good hook in the main riff, but the song doesn't really go anywhere, it just ends.

Moving over toward Gary Numan territory we find Greg Vandike's "Clone" on the Cloned Records label (single-minded sort, isn't he?). There's a good beat, nice synthi backing, and hand claplike rhythm, but a lack of much new to say. Good dance/background muzick.

Over on the Bozo end of the scale we've got Gerry and the Holograms on the Absurd Records label. The loonies responsible for this, I understand, are otherwise known as Alberto y los Trios Paranoias (of "Snuff Rock" fame), and one doesn't have to look too closely to see old Gerry's cheek bulging from a firm application of his tongue (even if he does have a bag over his head on the sleeve). Side A, same title as the group, goes: "Here we come, We're Gerry and the Holograms, There are now sixteen of me, before I was one man." And: "Did I say sixteen of me? Sorry we're only one, The others are just fragments, Of Gerry and the Holograms." Lotsa yucks, all droningly intoned by a metal-edged voice. Over on Gerry's B side (holograms, being three-dimensional, do have back sides) we find "Increased Resistance," which is something totally different—treated drums, throbbing in an African rhythm, and a quiet, effect-free, Kevin Ayers-like baritone speaking the lyrics. The vocals are a brief interlude in the song, but they are a pithy commentary on our decadent times. Truly an odd single, and





I hope there's more where it came from

Arriving in my possession almost simultaneously are two records of surprising similarity. They are pleasantly complementary, not imitative, and take off in slightly different directions from the same source material they are both somewhere between EPs and albums, twelve-inch 33 ⅓ RPM discs with about twenty minutes each of muzick. The first comes from the UK, on Polydor, from a band called Random Hold. The source material I spoke of is Phil Manzanera of the *Listen Now* and *K-Scope* LPs, with a bit of King Crimson and Peter Hammill (who produced the Random Hold record) thrown in like spices to add flavor. The muzick composition is supplied here by keyboardist David Ferguson and guitarist David Rhodes, two unfamiliar names, though also present is Manzanera/801/Matching Mole bassist Bill MacCormick, a player of flawless technique and versatility. Vocalist Random Hold sounds suspiciously like *Listen Now*'s Simon Ainley, who shares a cowriting credit on one song. The record opens, snarlingly, with "Meat," a compressed King Crimson statement, knife-edge sharp and surgically precise. "The Ballad" softens things up, mercifully, and moves us into Manzanera territory with some sleek guitar work from Rhodes and good vocalizing by Mr Hold. "Avalanche" is a rather pessimistic love song ("You can't swim out, you can only drown") with some restrained Manzanera/Fripp guitar and an energetic climax pushed by Peter Phipp's solid drumming. All too soon side one is over. Side two begins with "Film Music," a melancholy song about loss and fading memories. The Peter Hammillisms are pulled out for the record's closing number, "Montgomery Clift," with measured tempo, slow buildup, and a shouted climax. A strikingly good record I've been listening for some weeks without growing tired of it, and there is more to be found in it, I'm sure. The band has also released a single, "Eteeteraville" (written by Rhodes and MacCormick's brother Ian), that is less muzickally interesting than the album and lyrically returns us to the Philip Dick SF territory of *Listen Now*'s "Law & Order." I look forward to future releases.

From New York comes Material, and their album/EP called *Temporary Music 1* on the Zu label (the distributor is Red Records, 620 South Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19147). The producer here is Giorgio Gomelsky, whose history would take more room to recount than I have here. He's been associated with such people as the Yardbirds, Magma, Daevid Allen and Gong, and a slew of others. The engineer is Eddy Offord, who produced some of Yes's best records. Otherwise the band is unknown to me: Cliff Cultreri, Michael Beinhorn, Bill Laswell, and Fred Maher (no instrument credits are provided). The record is mostly instrumental and quite good. Heavily rhythmic, almost danceable with a light electronix touch and some fluid, snaking guitar. "White Man" is a humorous disco number with some squeaking rhythm and blues saxophone. "On Sadism" features some interesting use of prepared tapes and voices. "Process/Motion" is a jazzy number with Manzanera/Quiet Sun overtones. Like the rest of the record, it drips with honky funk and strong progressive rok influences. I'm pleased to see some intelligent, energetic rok being made in the USA. There's so damn little music in this country to be proud of.

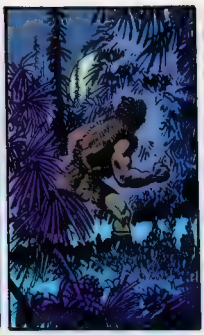
Consumer Service Section

It occurs to me that many of you people out there might not know where to procure the sort of records I've been talking about here and will continue to talk about as long as the rest of the world makes better rok than we Americans do (there are some exceptions, of course). If you live in a good-sized city, there probably is an enlightened record store somewhere in the vicinity (you just gotta look). Or you could prod an already established record store into stocking imports and independent records, as there are distribution networks that the owner, if he gives a shit, can hook into (the most well-known is Jem Records, PO Box 343, South Plainfield, NJ 07080; phone 201-753-6100). Of course the easiest thing to do is make a field trip to New York once a week and stop in at Bleecker Bob's at 179 MacDougal Street, New York, NY 10011, just south of Eighth Street. The store has by far the best new wave/import/indie record selection around, and it's run by the most endearingly obnoxious guy to eat vinyl for breakfast that you'll ever meet. Bob also has a mail-order catalogue that he'll send you for three bucks (he'll do *anything* for money), but new things come in almost daily and it is nearly impossible to keep the thing up-to-date. The catalogue does feature a snazzy Bobby London cover (for all you hopeless collectors) and serves as a reference to most of the good records released in the past three years. Get with it, white boys, this is *all* temporary muzick, and the time to listen is *now*.

Caveat Emptor: There's a bootleg making the rounds of New York City record stores (as well as appearing in some mail-order ads) that calls itself *Television with Bryan Eno*, on the Pentagram label. Now, there are two mistakes/lies (take your pick) in that title: first, Brian is spelled wrong, and second, as far as my lead ears can tell Eno is nowhere to be found on this record. There are further similar untruths on the album jacket such as the credits to Eno of vocals and all arrangements (an insult and disservice to TV's Tom Verlaine) and the mislabeling of the last song on the record, the 13th Floor Elevators' "Fire Engine," as "High Voltage Pleasure," with cowriting credit to Eno. Such horseshit. I first saw Television about five years ago, and in the succeeding four years of their existence I saw them perhaps a total of two dozen times. At their best, Television was an intensely emotional experience. Tom Verlaine radiated a fierce aura of tension and frustration, as though struggling through insurmountable resistance to express something of such delicate beauty that it would shatter from his very touch. In "Kingdom Come," the traditional set climax, came the release of all those barely contained energies packed into Verlaine's frail body. Whew. This album is *perhaps* the demo tapes Eno recorded with the band in 1974. It certainly is the band at an early, primitive stage (no later than 1975) and the recording quality is murky at best, sounding, at times, like it was done over the phone (a cassette that I made of the band at around the same time is far superior). If you are not a Television fanatic, *keep away*. Save your money. It is *not* an addition to anyone's Eno collection, despite the impression the jacket is calculated to give.

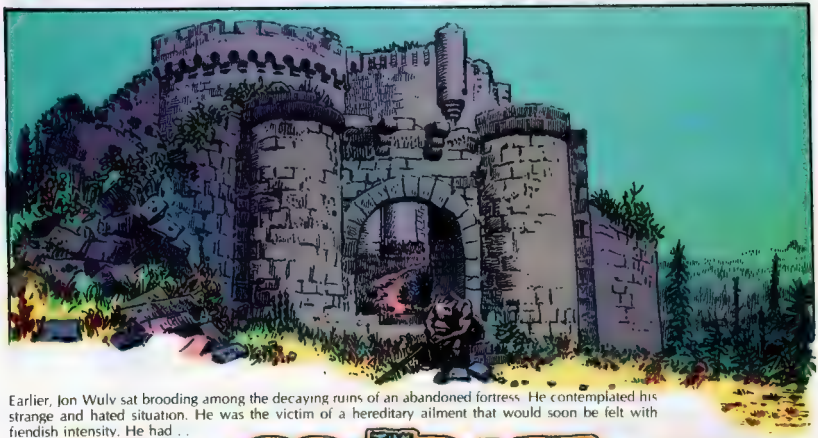
A dark figure runs headlong through the forest.

A horrible fear drives him beyond the limits of endurance.



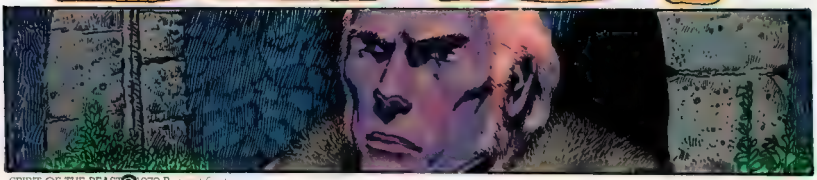
Panting, gasping, he does not stop.

Pursued by the hideous forces of Hell he staggers on.



Earlier, Jon Wulv sat brooding among the decaying ruins of an abandoned fortress. He contemplated his strange and hated situation. He was the victim of a hereditary ailment that would soon be felt with fiendish intensity. He had . .

THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAST

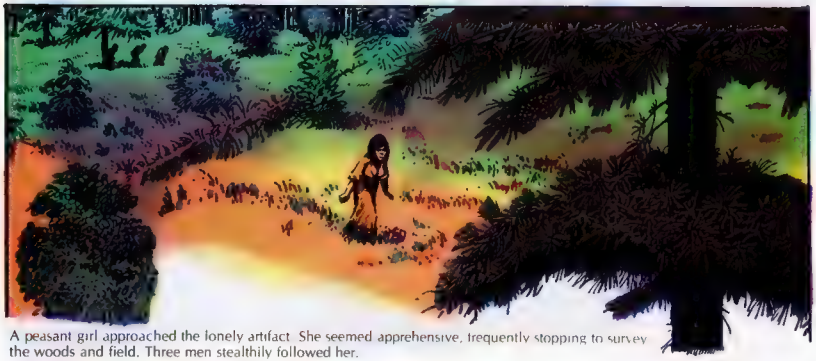


SPIRIT OF THE BEAST © 1979 Richard Corben

The singular condition manifested many side effects, some of which were actually beneficial.

Jon Wulv had never suffered the effects of normal diseases; his strength was inhuman.

His senses of sight, smell, and hearing were acute



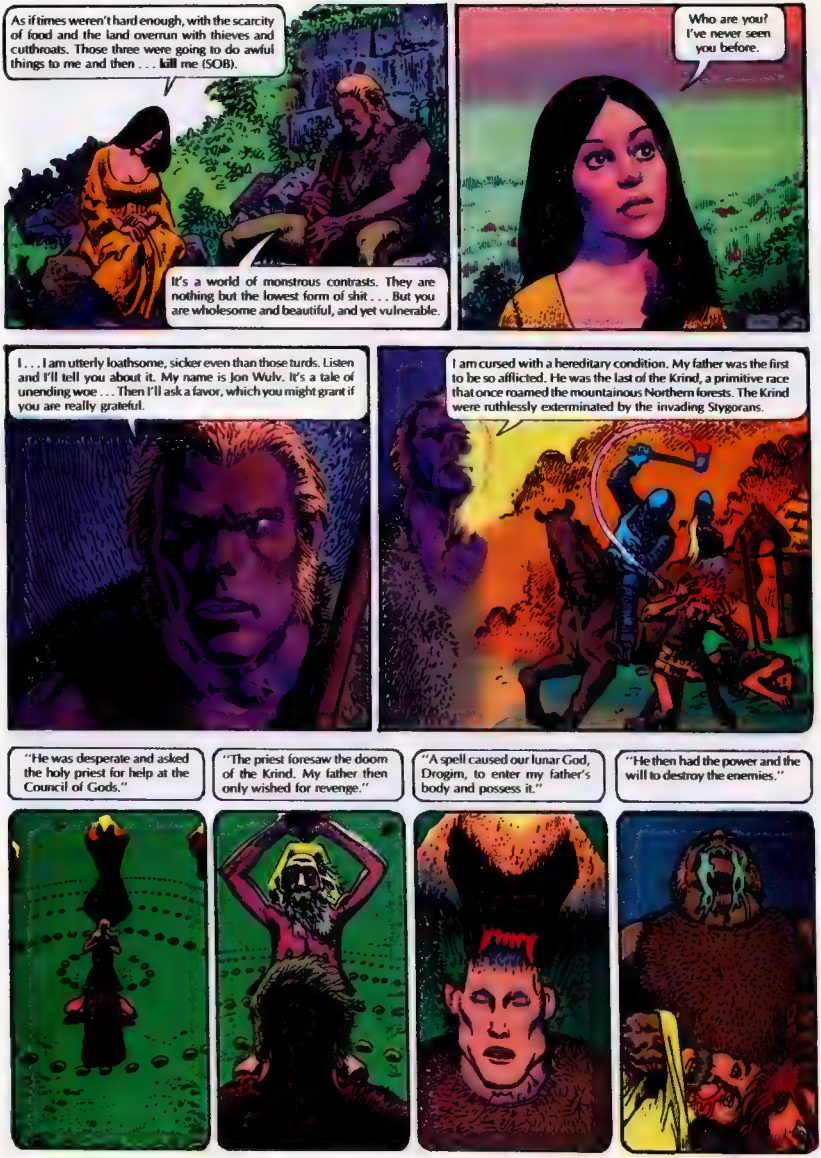
A peasant girl approached the lonely artifact. She seemed apprehensive, frequently stopping to survey the woods and field. Three men stealthily followed her.

Jon Wulv hid in the crumbling castle keep.

As the girl entered the scattered stonework, the pursuing party split and sent one member to flank their prey.

She turned and saw the men.

AAAIIEEH!
C'mon Jack, I got 'er.
Heh, heh, heh! Hey, stop fighting you bitch or you'll go out hard!
Intent on their play, the three men did not see Jon Wulv approach.
WHAK!
OOF!
THOK
KRAK
BEGONE or I'll kick your god-damned heads in!
Oh thank you. They were going to kill me. I'm sure of it.
Never mind. I didn't like their looks, anyway.


As if times weren't hard enough, with the scarcity of food and the land overrun with thieves and cutthroats. Those three were going to do awful things to me and then . . . kill me (SOB).
It's a world of monstrous contrasts. They are nothing but the lowest form of shit . . . But you are wholesome and beautiful, and yet vulnerable.
Who are you? I've never seen you before.
I . . . I am utterly loathsome, sicker even than those turds. Listen and I'll tell you about it. My name is Jon Wulv. It's a tale of unending woe . . . Then I'll ask a favor, which you might grant if you are really grateful.
I am cursed with a hereditary condition. My father was the first to be so afflicted. He was the last of the Krind, a primitive race that once roamed the mountainous Northern forests. The Krind were ruthlessly exterminated by the invading Stygorans.
"He was desperate and asked the holy priest for help at the Council of Gods."
"The priest foresaw the doom of the Krind. My father then only wished for revenge."
"A spell caused our lunar God, Drogim, to enter my father's body and possess it."
"He then had the power and the will to destroy the enemies."

"He killed many and they fled our sacred land. But a Stygoran woman tricked him, seduced him . . . and slew him. The fearsome seed survived. She begat me."

So the spirit of Drogim is within me. During the lunar cycle when the moon is full . . . I become a beast like my father.
Tonight the moon is full!

Yes. I was seeking aid from a sorceror, but I haven't found him in time.

Please grant me this favor. There is a strong cell yet intact in this tower. Lock me in it now and release me at dawn. I beg you lest I shed blood.

Jon, I fear those brutes are waiting for me in the shadows.

The darkness closed in. All was silent for a while. She heard his breathing become louder and coarser.

C'mon. It's dark enough. They're still in the donjon
I'll repay that clod. OOWCH! My leg is still killing me. Swellin' up.
Heh, heh, heh! It'll be sweet work tonight.
Ah, there she is I get first cut!
AAAH!
HA HA HA!
BAM BAM BAM
OOOH!
SKRUUK
POP!

Damn you! You killed my brother.
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE
C'mon! She must've jumped
UNNGH!
Do ya see her?
BAM BAM BAM
Unf! No, NO!
NO, NO, PLEASE!

It's really incredible
Those three came back
You became a beast, just like you said you would. You broke through the door
You killed them—
—and you ate them!

Jon Wulv runs. The bloodlust is now gone as if it were only a dream. He remembers nothing but a vague sense of violent frenzy. He runs in horror. He runs to escape the spirit of Drogim, but it is always there, in his head. There is one odd thing, though. The remains of the bodies showed that they had been roasted over a fire. Werewolves don't cook their victims, do they?

THE END

the alchemist supreme

By godard and ribera

SPACE IS LIKE AN IMMENSE BLACK OCEAN THROUGH WHICH FLOATS THE DEBRIS OF MULTIPLE SHIPWRECKS. LEGENDS SPEAK OF PLACES WHERE ONLY FOOLS VENTURE.. PLACES LIKE THIS ONE WHERE SOMETIMES A BOULDER DRIFTS, BEATEN BY THE COSMIC WINDS OF INTERSTELLAR PARTICLES AND SHAKEN BY MAGNETIC STORMS...

A MINISCULE ISLAND, SINISTER AND GLACIAL.. AN ASTEROID SPINNING IN THE PERPETUAL NIGHT OF DEEP SPACE..

...ON WHICH, THE SILVER DOLPHIN, A VESSEL AS LARGE AS A CITY, HAS LANDED. ITS STORES NEED RE-STOCKING. AVIDLY, IT TAKES IN NUMEROUS, RARE MINERALS FROM THE ASTEROID'S SOIL WITH WHICH IT NOURISHES ITS MACHINES...

THAT HUGE SOFT NOODLE NO LONGER CARES FOR ANYTHING EXCEPT TO SLEEP AS IF HE WAS IN THE ARMS OF AN OLD WHORE. SHIT! I'M SO BORED WITH THIS!

...AND WHILE UNDER THE SHIP'S FRAMED STOMACH, THE MYSTERIOUS ALCHEMY TAKES PLACE AUTOMATICALLY, AN IDLE AXLE MUNSHINE STRETCHES OUT ON THE TRANSLATOR AND FALLS ASLEEP...

POOH! WHAT A DISASTER!

WELL! I'M NOT GOING TO JUST SIT AROUND, TWIDDLING MY THUMBS! I'LL TAKE A WALK! AND IF SOMETHING HAPPENS TO ME, IT'LL SERVE HIM RIGHT!

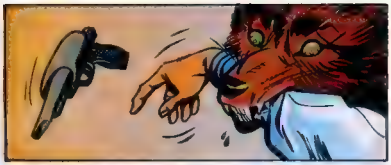
OBVIOUSLY, BEFORE STICKING MY NOSE OUTSIDE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN PRUDENT—I SHOULD HAVE HAD THE LAB DO A CEREBIONICAL SWEEP TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT NOTHING LIVES HERE...
BUT WHO'D BE FOOLISH ENOUGH TO WANT TO LIVE ON THIS ROTTEN BOULDER? THERE'S NO SENSE IN BEING THAT PRUDENT!
HOWEVER...
THE WALL... ALWAYS THE WALL... WHEREVER MY STEPS TAKE ME, THE WALL IS ALWAYS THERE...
CHIMEER, I KNOW THAT YOU ARE IN THERE, ON THE OTHER SIDE, VERY CLOSE... I CAN HEAR YOUR BREATHING. I KNOW THE SMELL OF YOUR HAIR, AND IN MY MOUTH, THE TASTE OF YOUR TEARS...
I AM HERE...
I'M LOSING HOPE... THIS IS TOO HARD AND I'VE USED UP ALL MY STRENGTH, AND TIME IS PASSING BY... O GOD OF DESPAIR AND HATE, WHY PUT UP SUCH A RAMPART BETWEEN HER AND ME?

DON'T INSULT HIM... ADORE HIM... BEG HIM... GO SEE HIM... EXPLAIN TO HIM...
...ONLY THE ALL POWERFUL, IF HE SO DESIRES, WILL REUNITE US!
...IR...
...IR...
...IR...
!?!
HUM! THIS, IS STRANGE! IT LOOKS LIKE THE DROPPINGS OF A DOG.
!?!
I'M NOT MISTAKEN— SHE DID SAY IT... I'LL PLAY THE END OF THE HOLOGRAPHICAL RECORDING AGAIN.
ONLY THE ALL POWERFUL, IF HE SO DESIRES, WILL REUNITE US!
SHE SAID IT, I DID DREAM IT!
OF COURSE. HE COULD IF HE WANTED... BUT HOW CAN I FIND WHERE THOSE BANDITS FROM THE GUILD HAVE HIDDEN HER?

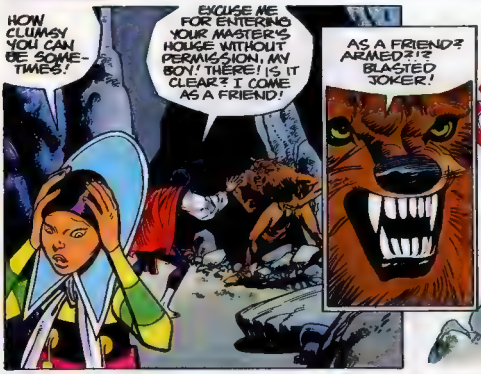
AXLE! STOP PLAYING WITH YOUR IMBECILIC TOY AND LISTEN TO ME! YOU'LL NEVER GUESS WHAT I JUST SAW!
I GIVE UP.
I SAW A CLEBS IN THE RAVINE.
A CLEBS?
WELL, NOT EXACTLY A CLEBS- HE WAS HALF DOG ON TOP AND HALF HUMAN ON THE BOTTOM. I WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THE REVERSE, BELIEVE ME! IF YOU HAD SEEN ITS FANGS!
A MOLOSS HERE!? COULD IT BE THE ALL POWERFUL GIVING ME A SIGN?
HUH? WHAT DID HE SAY? WHAT'S A MOLOSS?
LITTLE CLOWN, YOU AND I ARE GOING OUT THERE. IT'S ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY THAT I FIND HIM AND TALK TO HIM.
THAT GUY DIDN'T HAVE A HEAD FOR CONVERSATION... AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T EXPLAINED...WHAT'S A MOLOSS?
SHOW ME THE WAY, AND LET'S HURRY! I'LL EXPLAIN IT TO YOU LATER.

IT WAS OVER THERE...
THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME - THERE ARE TRACES OF LIFE HERE...
ANYWAY, THE MOLOSSES NEVER LIVE ALONE.
YOU AND YOUR TRACES OF LIFE... YOU MAKE ME LAUGH! JUST HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FIND THE BEAST?
IT'S NOT COMPLICATED. MOLOSSES DON'T LIKE TO HAVE THEIR TERRITORY INVADED. AS SOON AS WE'VE CROSSED OVER THE BORDER, HE'LL ATTACK US.
THE MAIN THING IS TO KNOW WHEN WE CROSS IT. WHERE IS THIS DAMNED BORDER?
YOU'VE JUST CROSSED IT, PAL!
LISTEN, MY BOY! WHY GET UPSET? WE'RE NOT YOUR MASTER'S ENEMIES. I CAME TO TALK TO YOU! TO YOU!
OMIGOD! WHAT A JAW HE HAS!
GROAARRRRR
PLAGUE TAKE YOU, WILD DOG!

GRAAAR
RAGROAAAR
SHOOT, AXLE, SHOOT! YOU CAN TALK AFTERWARDS!
RRRR



PLOK


HOW CLUMSY YOU CAN BE SOMETIMES!
EXCUSE ME FOR ENTERING YOUR MASTER'S HOUSE WITHOUT PERMISSION, MY BOY! THERE! IS IT CLEAR? I COME AS A FRIEND!
AS A FRIEND? ARMED?!? BLASTED JOKER!

GROOAARR
GRRR
THE ANIMAL IS ENRAGED!

AND I CAN'T GET AT THIS CURSED POP GUN!

MUSKY! DO SOMETHING! HE... HE'S GOING TO END UP SLAUGHTERING ME!
IF ONLY HE COULD HOLD STILL A MINUTE...

GET DOWN, FREE! DAY! DOWN, I SAY!
?!?

ARE YOU SURE?.. YOU CAN'T TRUST THOSE PEOPLE, ROBSON!
DON'T ARGUE! BE GOOD!
OOOOH, OKAY! IT'S NOT WORTH PUSHING, I GUESS... I ONLY WANTED TO SCARE HIM! I BARELY BIT HIM, AND HE WAS ARMED!
LEAVE US ALONE THEN, DOG! AT LAST WE HAVE VISITORS!
ROBSON?.. HE DID SAY ROBSON?
HE DID. HELLO, AXLE.
BUT OF COURSE! IT'S YOU!. ROBSON! YOU OLD FOOL! IT'S REALLY YOU!
IN THE FLESH, MY BOY!
GRRRRR! WHAT A GREETING!
IT WOULD BE BETTER TO AVOID EFFUSIVENESS— HE'S A LITTLE JEALOUS.
YOU SHOULD TEACH HIM GOOD MANNERS!
SPEAKING OF GOOD MANNERS, MUSKY, I WANT YOU TO MEET ROBSON KRUZ' HOEY, MY BEST FRIEND FROM THE TIME WHEN WE WERE STUDENT PILOTS! A RENEGADE LIKE ME, NOW, AND ONE WHOM THE GUILD ALSO SEEKS...
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE FORMAL ABOUT IT.

COME, AXLE! DRINK THE CUP OF FRIENDSHIP! AND TALK A BIT TO YOUR OLD FRIEND... WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN THESE HOSTILE REGIONS?
GOD!
GOD?! ... WHAT DO YOU MEAN, GOD? ARE YOU SPEAKING OF THE SUPREME ALCHEMIST?
CALL HIM WHAT YOU WILL. WHAT DOES IT MATTER! YOU UNDERSTAND ME. I WANT TO MEET HIM IN PERSON!!
MEET THE ALL POWERFUL? COME ON, AXLE!... WHO STILL BELIEVES THAT NONSENSE. THOSE WORN-OUT IDEAS. THOSE CHILDISH FABLES?
THEY'RE COMPLETELY OUTDATED.
THOSE AREN'T CHILDISH FABLES, FRIEND OF MY FRIEND. THE VERY HIGH EXISTS!
SURE, CHARLIE!
MY BRAVE MOLOSS, OF FATHER, PEACE TO HIS SOUL! OFTEN HE TOLD ME ABOUT IT WHEN I WAS STILL A YOUNG, INEXPERIENCED, AND TEASING MOLASS (*). IN HIS YOUTH HE HAD A RELATIONSHIP, BRIEF ITS TRUE, BUT TUMULTUOUS, WITH A CHANCE GIRL FRIEND WHOSE DISTANT COUSIN BY MARRIAGE WAS A PART OF... OF...
OF?
THE GREAT PACK!
MOLASS: MAN-PUPPY
TO BE CONTINUED...

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

#1/APRIL, 1977: *The* Collector's Edition, with the debut of Moebius's Arzach, Corben's 'Den', Bodé's Sunpot and more ($5.00)

#2/MAY, 1977: Russian astronauts, Roger the paranoid puppet 'Conquering Armies,' the ultimate rock festival and more ($4.00)

#3/JUNE, 1977: Macedo's Rockblitz, the highly praised Shells, the beginning of Davis's "World Apart", Moebius, Corben, Bodé, more ($3.00)

#4/JULY, 1977: Lots of Moebius, 'Azarch," plus part one of "The Long Tomorrow," also the final installment of 'Sunpot' ($3.00)

#5/AUGUST, 1977: The saga of Polonius begins, "The Long Tomorrow" concludes and "The World Apart" and "Den" continue ($3.00)

#6/SEPTEMBER, 1977: Roger Zelazny has a short story, Moebius a space opera, plus more 'World Apart', 'Den' and Polonius ($3.00)

#7/OCTOBER, 1977: Fiction by Theodore Sturgeon, Moebius's Airtight Garage, 'Den' and 'Polonius *redux*', yet more ($3.00)

#8/NOVEMBER, 1977: New Harlan Ellison fiction, nine color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud conclusions for 'Polonius' and 'World Apart' ($3.00)

#9/DECEMBER, 1977: Extra pages for the complete 'Vuzz' by Druillet, Fortune's Fool by Chaykin and Wein, plus full color contributions form Corben, Macedo, Claveloux and Moebius ($3.00)

#10/JANUARY, 1978: Morrow illustrates Zelazny, Lob and Pichard update *Ulysses*, "Conquering Armies" concludes, "Den" continues. ($3.00)

#11/FEBRUARY, 1978: New adventures of Barbarella, wraparound cover and center spread by Nino, plus Moebius, Corben, et al. ($3.00)

#12/MARCH, 1978: Swashbuckling Onon makes a debut, courtesy of Gray Morrow and there's more Barbarella, more Urm, and yet more Den. ($3.00)

#13/APRIL, 1978: Our first anniversary issue! A thirty-page insert from Paradise 9, and Barbarella gives birth, while Den wraps it up ($3.00)

#14/MAY, 1978: "Urm the Mad" waves bye-bye, but "Orion" and "Barbarella" continue, and Alex Nino tips his hat ($3.00)

#15/JUNE, 1978: Corben introduces Shahrazad Sturgeon's classic "More Than Human" is illustrated, more "Barbarella," and the origins of "Heilman" ($3.00)

#16/JULY, 1978: A happy ending for "Barbarella," a sad ending for "1996," the resumption of Druillet's "Gail," yet more "Heilman," "Orion," "More Than Human," and Corben's "Arabian Nights." ($3.00)

#17/AUGUST, 1978: Sorry—SOLD OUT!

#18/SEPTEMBER, 1978: Corben's "Sindbad," Moebius's "Major," "Heilman," "Orion," "Lone Sloane on Gail," and Harlan Ellison too! ($3.00)

#19/OCTOBER, 1978: "Exterminator 17," Ellison's illustrated "Glass Goblin," the debut of McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous," plus the usual ($3.00)

#20/NOVEMBER, 1978: Twenty pages of the Delany/Chaykin "Empire," more "Sindbad," "Exterminator," Major Grubert Heilman's final rebirth, more. ($3.00)

#21/DECEMBER, 1978: The stocking's full with "Orion," Kirchner's "Tarot," and twelve beautiful pages of Moebius ($3.00)

#22/JANUARY, 1979: Trina makes her debut here, and Druillet concludes "Gail," plus McKie and Corben! How much can you take? ($3.00)

#23/FEBRUARY, 1979: "Galactic Geographic," "Starcrown," Corben's "Sindbad," McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous," plus Moebius, Bilal and Macedo ($3.00)

#24/MARCH, 1979: Twenty pages of Chaykin illustrating Bester's "The Stars My Destination," "Starcrown" II, and Ellison's late show ($3.00)

#25/APRIL, 1979: Our second birthday bash, with Chaykin's "Gideon Faust," and "Alien" portfolio, Val Mayerik's "Time Out," more. ($3.00)

#26/MAY, 1979: It's all-American (except for Druillet's "Déco" and a Proust joke): fifteen entries including Corben, Morrow, the illustrated "Alien" ($3.00)

#27/JUNE, 1979: Fifty-four pages of "Captain Future," plus more illustrated "Alien," and the final episode of "So Beautiful and So Dangerous" ($3.00)

#28/JULY, 1979: Bodé's "Zooks" premieres, Corben's "Sindbad" concludes Morrow and Moebius continue. Mike Hinge debuts ($3.00)

#29/AUGUST, 1979: Caza steals the show with "New Ark City," plus Mayerik, Suydam, Galactic Geographic," Bodé, more. ($3.00)

#30/SEPTEMBER, 1979: "Elric," "Buck Rogers," a lizard named Elvis and "Little Red V-3," alongside Montellier and Moebius. ($3.00)

#31/OCTOBER, 1979: Halloween strikes with a tribute to H.P. Lovecraft with Moebius, Druillet, Suydam, others. ($3.00)

#32/NOVEMBER, 1979: Let us give thanks for Corben's "Rowlf," Bodé's "Zooks," Brunner's "Elric," Chaykin's "Stars My Destination," Moebius, and more ($3.00)

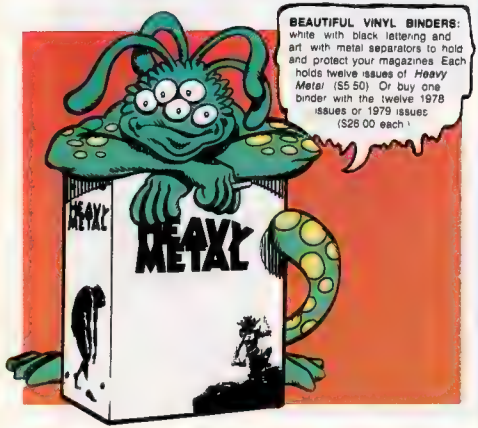
#33/DECEMBER, 1979: A Christmas package from Caza, Corben, Kofoed, Suydam, Stiles, Trina, Moebius, and Ellison, plus "Gnomes" and "Giants" ($3.00)

#34/JANUARY, 1980: A new year—*a new decade*—begins with a new look for *HM* with the debut of four new columnists, new artists Neal McPheeters and Dan Steffan, the conclusion of Corben's "Rowlf," and much more! ($3.00)

#35/FEBRUARY, 1980: An eerie Couratin cover adorns this winter issue. Corben's "The Beast of Wolfton" begins. McKie Experiments with the Air Pump and we join Matt Howarth on a crazed acid trip ($3.00)

#36/MARCH, 1980 Why did The Crevasse take Jeannette? For the answer read the Schuiten Bros. strip! Plus, Corben, Matena, Moebius, and Lee Marrs's "Good Vibrations" ($3.00)

#37/APRIL, 1980: Our Third Anniversary issue — 32 pages of "Champakou" in living color, the final installment of Moebius's "Airtight Garage," plus Caza, Bilal, Howarth, Corben, Bode—and *more*! ($3.00)



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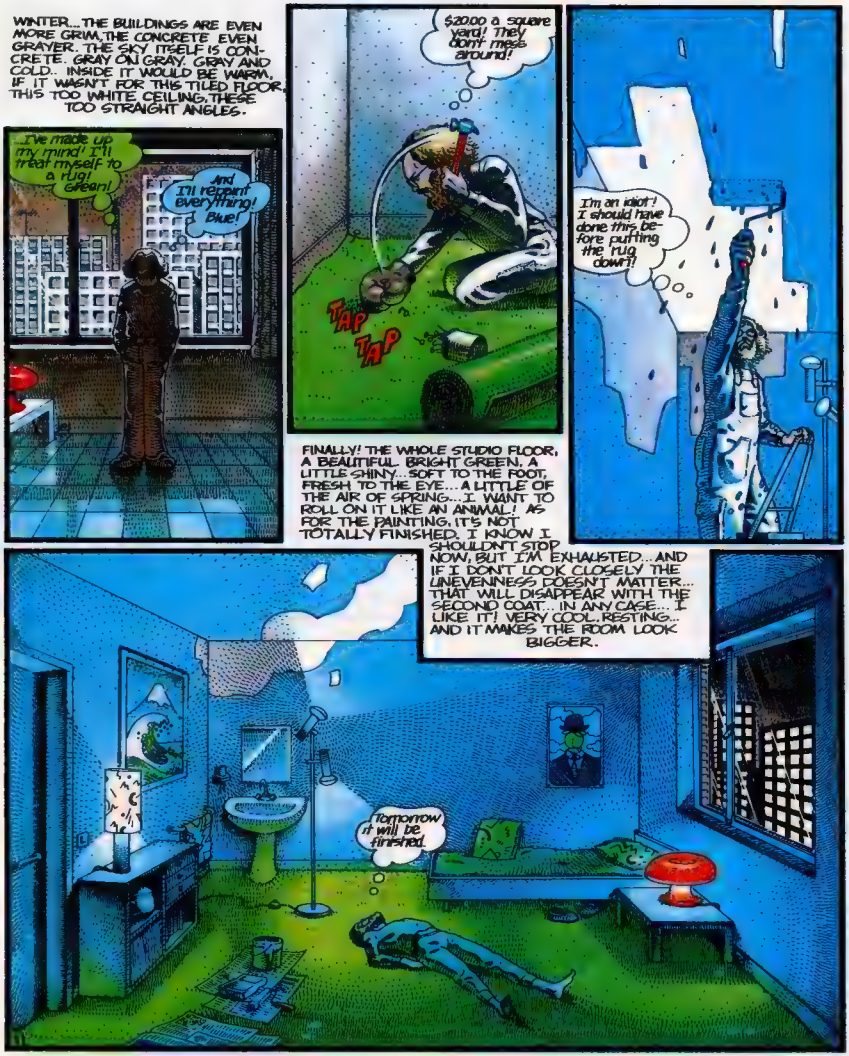
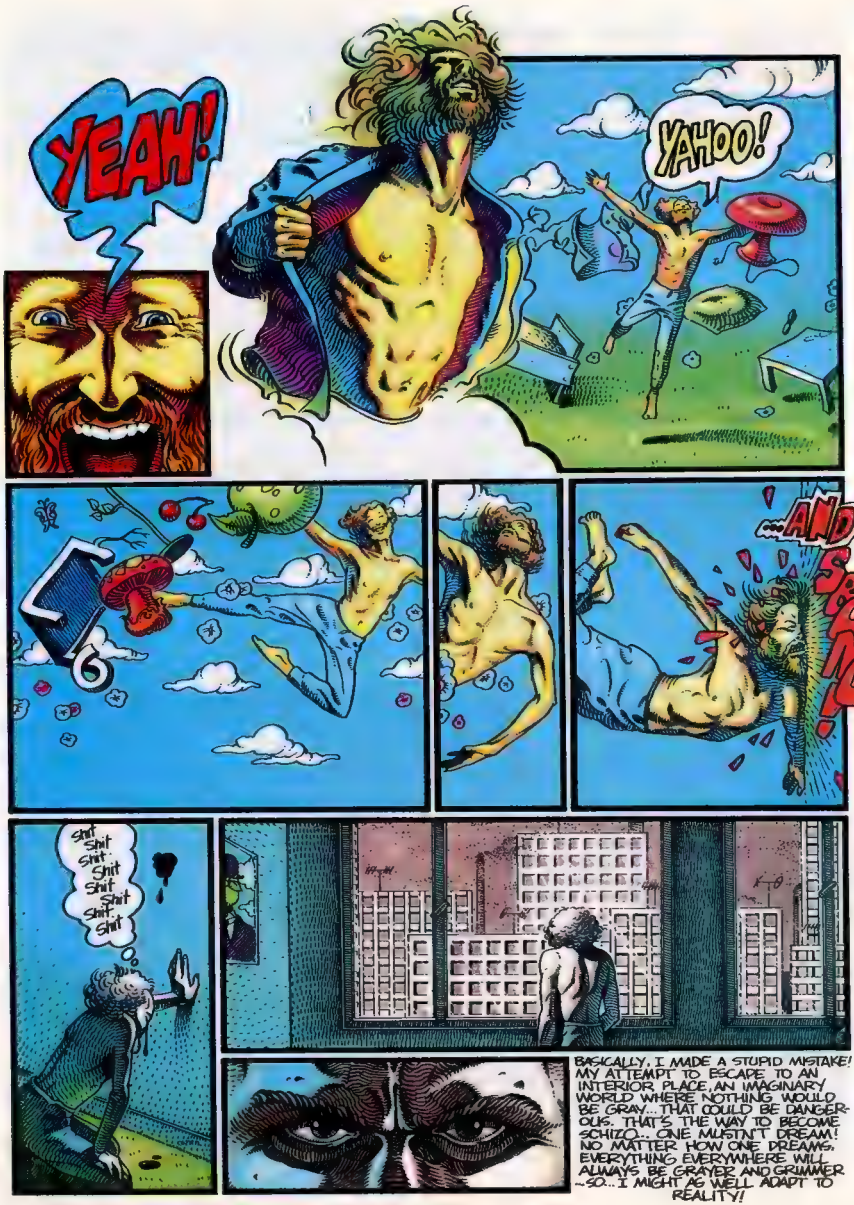
Suburban Scenes: December
by Caza


WINTER... THE BUILDINGS ARE EVEN MORE GRIM, THE CONCRETE EVEN GRAYER. THE SKY ITSELF IS CONCRETE. GRAY ON GRAY. GRAY AND COLD. INSIDE IT WOULD BE WARM, IF IT WASN'T FOR THIS TILED FLOOR, THIS TOO WHITE CEILING, THESE TOO STRAIGHT ANGLES.
...I've made up my mind! I'll treat myself to a rug! Green!
And I'll redpaint everything! Blue!
$2000 a square yard! They don't mess around!
TAP TAP
I'm an idiot! I should have done this before putting the rug down!!
FINALLY! THE WHOLE STUDIO FLOOR, A BEAUTIFUL BRIGHT GREEN, A LITTLE SHINY... SOFT TO THE FOOT, FRESH TO THE EYE... A LITTLE OF THE AIR OF SPRING... I WANT TO ROLL ON IT LIKE AN ANIMAL! AS FOR THE PAINTING, IT'S NOT TOTALLY FINISHED. I KNOW I SHOULDN'T STOP NOW, BUT I'M EXHAUSTED... AND IF I DON'T LOOK CLOSELY THE UNEVENNESS DOESN'T MATTER... THAT WILL DISAPPEAR WITH THE SECOND COAT... IN ANY CASE... I LIKE IT! VERY COOL. RESTING... AND IT MAKES THE ROOM LOOK BIGGER.
Tomorrow it will be finished.

FLAP
FLAP
BZZZ
COCORICO!
"Cocorico"?
WAAH
?
TIN!


YEAH!
YAHOO!
...AND
SPANG!
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
Shit
BASICALLY, I MADE A STUPID MISTAKE! MY ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE TO AN INTERIOR PLACE, AN IMAGINARY WORLD WHERE NOTHING WOULD BE GRAY... THAT COULD BE DANGEROUS. THAT'S THE WAY TO BECOME SCHIZO... ONE MUSTN'T DREAM! NO MATTER HOW ONE DREAMS, EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE WILL ALWAYS BE GRAYER AND GRIMMER ...SO... I MIGHT AS WELL ADAPT TO REALITY!

...SO I TOOK ALL THE COLORS, ALL THE BEAUTIFUL COLORS—THE SUN YELLOW, AZURE BLUE, APPLE GREEN, MEADOW GREEN, JADE GREEN, AND THE RED OF FIRE, THE INDIAN ROSE, GOLDEN AND ORANGE AND LILAC—AND I MIXED THEM ALL TOGETHER. THE COLORS INTERTWINED AND SHIMMERED FOR A SINGLE INSTANT... AND THEN DISAPPEARED. THERE REMAINED ONLY GRAY.

AND IT'S WITH THIS GRAY THAT, DELIBERATELY, WITHOUT HATE AND WITHOUT PITY, I REPAINT MY INTERIOR SPACE.

...BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THIS PAINT! IT DOESN'T COVER WELL... OR MAYBE IT'S THE OLD PLASTER FLAKING OFF. IT STANDS OUT IN SPOTS...CHIPPING OFF IN BIG FLAKES LIKE AN OBSTINATE DREAM...

...OF SNOW!

CAZA 76

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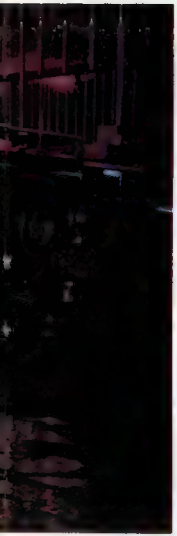
GALLERY SECTION: NEW BOOKS

Some excellent books have come out since we last had the opportunity to run the Gallery. Herewith, a few glimpses of Syd Mead's *Sentinel*, the *Tolkien Bestiary*, *Dan Dare*, *Elfspire*, and *The Studio*. Enjoy.

Sentinel For more than twenty years, Syd Mead had been perched on the cutting edge of industrial design. Always looking to the future, Mead's designs (for Ford Motor Company, U.S Steel, and others) have a hardheaded practicality while his renderings cannot be regarded as anything less than beautiful art. Dragon's Dream has brought together the first comprehensive collection of Mead's work in ***Sentinel***, with text commentary by Strother McMinn



Elfspire

John Pocsik (whose *Starcrown* was serialized here a year ago) has written in ***Elfspire*** a fantasy novel that is being compared with Tolkien's ***Lord of the Rings***. The novel, published by Ariel Books (and distributed by Simon & Schuster), is lavishly illustrated in the classic tradition, with over sixty black-and-white drawings and nine oil paintings by Thomas Blackshear, making one of the most handsome fantasy books of the year.

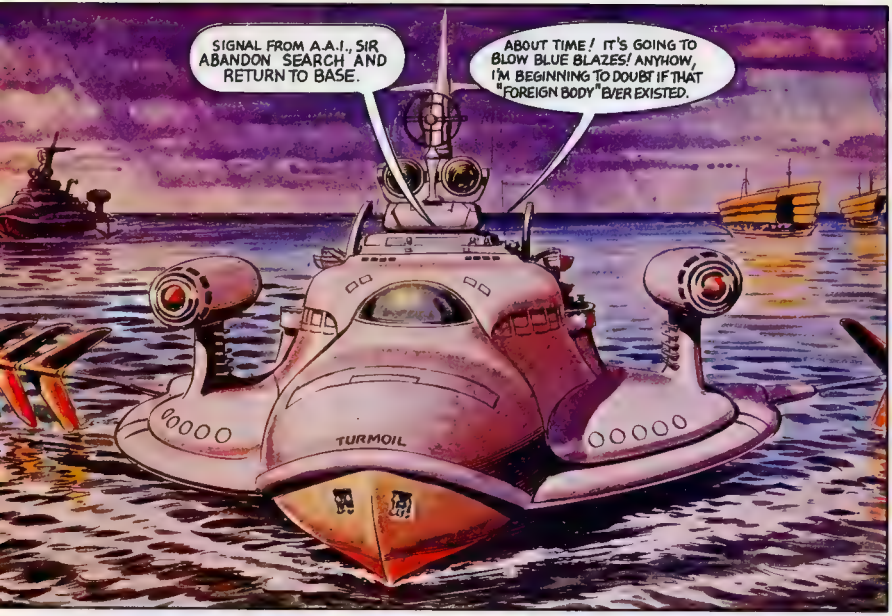
A Tolkien Bestiary

One of the most unusual of the books relating to Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* is David Day's *A Tolkien Bestiary*. A scholarly (but not dry) compendium of 129 separate races of creatures to be found in Tolkien's works, the book includes maps, chronologies, genealogies, and is sumptuously illustrated by eleven artists, in both black-and-white and color. Shown here are details from illustrations by Allen Curless (above) and Ian Miller.

The Studio The Studio doesn't exist any more. But when it did, it was on Manhattan's West Twenty-sixth Street and was the working space for Jeff Jones, Mike Kaluta, Barry Smith, and Berni Wrightson. Established in 1975, the Studio was to be the focal point for these four artists for the next several years. To celebrate its passing, Dragon's Dream has published ***The Studio***, in which the works of each of the four artists are collected.

The Studio

Clockwise, from above: Wrightson, Kaluta, Smith, Jones. These are details from larger pieces; for a critical overview of *The Studio* see Jay Kinney's "Comix," this issue.


SIGNAL FROM A.A.I., SIR ABANDON SEARCH AND RETURN TO BASE.
ABOUT TIME! IT'S GOING TO BLOW BLUE BLAZES! ANYHOW, I'M BEGINNING TO DOUBT IF THAT "FOREIGN BODY" EVER EXISTED.
TURMOIL

DIGBY'S GOT THE SHARPEST EYES IN SPACE FLEET, SIR. HE SWEARS HE SAW A SORT OF SPACIAL TORPEDO LEAVE THAT SHIP BEFORE IT EXPLODED.
NOW DON'T START THAT AGAIN, DAN. LET'S FIND THE MOTHER SHIP BEFORE WE START CHASING HER LITTLE ONES!

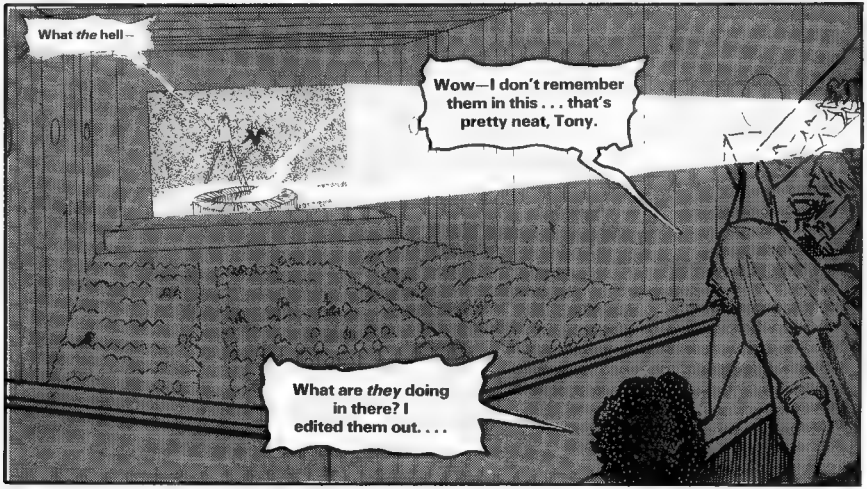
Dan Dare, Pilot of the Future in *The Man from Nowhere*

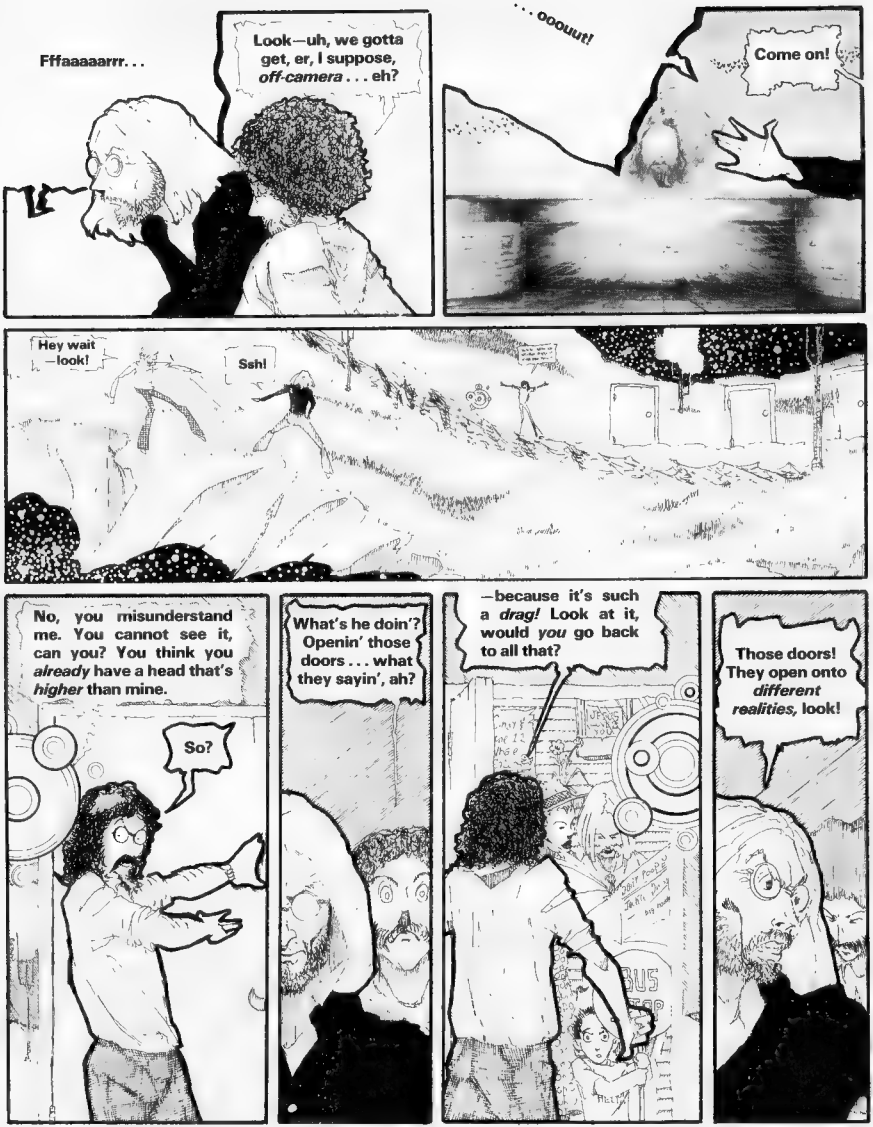
Dan Dare is for British SF comics what Flash Gordon was in America—beautifully drawn with full process color, careful in its attention to detail (Arthur C. Clarke was a "scientific consultant" on the strip), a milestone work. First published in the *Eagle* in the fifties and early sixties, the strips by creator Frank Hampson and Don Harley are now being collected by Dragon's Dream in book form. Seen here are sample panels from volume one, *The Man from Nowhere*. Volume two, *Rogue Planet*, continues the projected trilogy.

Changes

Matt Howarth

WAR-PLACE BEYOND THE SCREEN
BY HOWARTH/ADAPTED FROM *WALKER*, A FILM BY TONY SCIARRA/ WITH PHOTO BY THE LATE JULIAN KERNES




Fffaaaaarrr. . .
Look—uh, we gotta get, er, I suppose, *off-camera* . . . eh?
. . . oooouut!
Come on!
Hey wait —look!
Ssh!
No, you misunderstand me. You cannot see it, can you? You think you *already* have a head that's *higher* than mine.
So?
What's he doin'? Openin' those doors . . . what they sayin', ah?
—because it's such a *drag!* Look at it, would *you* go back to all that?
Those doors! They open onto *different realities,* look!

I'm shouting, don't hear me.
Come on, he's gone now.
Not this one.
We'll go down the row . . . each one. . . .
Actually it's not gonna be easy to find him this way.
Nuthin'.
I dunno . . . aahah!!
BOCHE!
You found him, eh? Well, well, well. . . .
With his hoarded collection of semivaluable acid containers!
What— Oh no—you!
DREAM #12

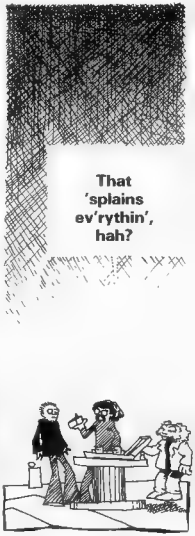
NEXT: through the megalomaniac escape route

Boche!
You scum, I'm gonna *eat* your adrenal gland!
Oh dear
Now—*OVARY!* He's shifted already!
ENOSSIFICATION
Hot spit! He went so fast, he dragged us along with him. *There* he is!
No, isn't *that* him. . . . No wait . . . uh. . . .
Doops—this isn't going well at all.
They *all* look like Eno. . . .
A whole reality of them —*how ingenious*. . . .
The *perfect* escape!
Damn your eyes, Boche! I'll get you sooner or later—you just see!

ENOSSIFICATION BY HOWARTH

NEXT: embosomed rest cure

AND FIND US BY TONY SCIARRA/ HOWARTH

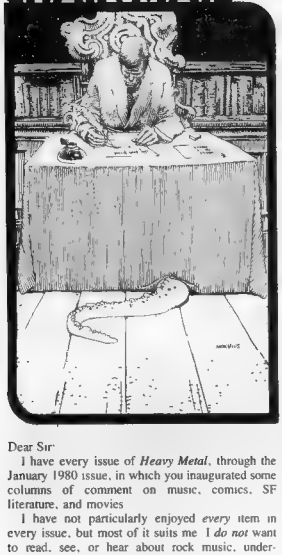


An' yo' been dun wrong, oh bro's?
PEACE
EASY RIDER
Damn straight.... That pig Boche....
This's good....
Th' cosmic doctor hisseff, damn! He serviced us real good this time ... demen snuff ... I see yo' heard of it, eh? Lousy thin' fo' him ta do to us. Ron's gon' kill him too, kill him jus' like th' assas'nation whut stahted this whole farce. If we don't get'im, Savage 'Enry'll avange us, when he re'pears....
You pig fuck — I do not believe you hit the wrong one again!
TEXAS
JFK
Ah sympathize wit' yo', truly. Allow me to ease yo' tens'ns.

Th' green do', bro's, an' avail yo'seffs of mah temtuous sleepin' orn'ments. We talk ov'r a hearty bre'ffust. While in mah presence, yo' gon' stay on this level until then, leasts.
Yllagah, laygahh!
'Lo? Hatm'n, do me sum'thin'. Check up on the mumble an' find out if mumble is still mumble. An' mumble? Yah.
Good —him too....
Ah doan think they under th' 'fects a demen snuff 'tall....
Dis situat'n is fah mo' twisted 'n it 'pears to th' eye at this time....
Yah, bye.

NEXT: the brothers fight over dead women.

CHAIN MAIL



Dear Sir:

I have every issue of *Heavy Metal*, through the January 1980 issue, in which you inaugurated some columns of comment on music, comics, SF literature, and movies.

I have not particularly enjoyed *every* item in every issue, but most of it suits me. I *do not* want to read, see, or hear about rock music, underground comix, SF literature, or *any* movie. I do not care much for your features, which are heavy on metaphysics, deep psychological aberrations, magic, ancient sorcerers, or *westerns*!! It seems to me that a comix publication dealing with science fiction should have *some* science—a lot, as a matter of fact—and not mostly blood and guts swordfighting, beating, etc.

So, leave the book reports, movie reviews, etc., to those (almost anybody else) who is more qualified to present them than you are.

Raymond L. Lumbley
Harrison, Ariz.

Dear Ted, et al..

Permanent fixtures, hopefully: Comix, Flix, SF, Muzick, and the Gallery Section. After all, these columns deal with today's art forms, and art (basically) is what *Heavy Metal* is all about. Also I like the fact that now it takes me longer than forty-five minutes to go from cover to cover. Another thing I would like to see full-time: front and back cover combinations like Punchatz's "'Repent, Harlequin!' Said the Ticktockman." Very sharp.

Mark Tapson
San Mateo, Ca.

Dear Ted:

What are you trying to do—kill *Heavy Metal*? Your "new" section is not what this magazine needs. Until *this* issue, *HM* has been super. You have simply added eighteen pages of trash. Why?

I'm an SF and fantasy nut. I could care less about rock. Lou Stathis should have been a victim. And what is a full-page Stevie Wonder ad doing in *this* magazine? Yuck! *[Like most of the rock album ads we've run in the past, it helped pay a few bills. Besides, it had nice art. —TW]*

Who needs a review of the movies? You can get that in any newspaper. And what about the "Comix" section? It is really boring, trivial crap. In the past, I've been able to read *HM* and escape from this type of junk. It is very run-of-the-mill stuff.

The Gallery Section is also superfluous. I can find more and better reviews in *Galileo*, if I want reviews, which I don't. *Heavy Metal* should be serving a different purpose entirely. The *total* accent should be on SF and fantasy. A heavy accent is not enough.

It is a shame you're going to leave out *good* material for this garbage. I'm sure it is much cheaper this way, but what a price to pay. Hell, you might as well leave out Moebius and Druillet, and add Mickey Mouse.

Please don't screw up a good thing!

Gerald L. Bean
Independence, Mo.

Gerald, read the editorial last issue. It was written especially for people like you. —TW

Dear Metalites,

Q: Who's the most useless person in the world?
A: A rock critic.

I point that out to demonstrate that this is not a personal attack on Lou Stathis (or Ted White), but merely a riposte aimed at punk supporters in general. The very vocal fans of the "new wave" have long had their say. Now it's time for a little dissension from the opposition.

With the end of the sixties, most rock musicians found the genre turning stale. Those seeking profit went with disco. Those longing to reanimate the quality and drive of their music founded fusion, the mating of rock and jazz. Others still grind out the old staple sound, but they're quite rare, and the gap has been filled by people who in no way deserve the title "musicians." Clowns and mental delinquents now populate the rock world, men and women of little ability, taste, or sense of purpose. To credit Roxy Music and the Sex Pistols with the only true innovations in seventies rock is no great compliment, since there's been no genuine creativity in that sound for a full decade. Instead, it has degenerated down to the level of pure noise for the sake of the lowest common denominator.

Extravagant sound equipment, financial backing, and a collection of tone-deaf enthusiasts do not make musicians out of incompetents, as bands like Devo, Talking Heads, and Elvis Costello have demonstrated. Learning three chords, writing inane lyrics, and screaming vocals at the top of one's lungs won't do it, either. It takes skill and practice, something obviously lacking in the "new wave." In the world of music, today's rockers are, indeed, punks, in every sense of the word. They've distorted their craft so horrendously, it can no longer be considered as any form of music, so they coin the term "muzick." Whatever they choose to call it, it's utter garbage, complete with the appropriate smell and appearance. All one needs to succeed in that arena is guts, a gimmick, and no talent whatsoever. Being stupid could prove useful, too.

Of course, it's just a matter of personal taste. I really don't give a fuck what anyone else listens to, but I am disturbed when I find the "new wave" flowing near my shores. It bothers me to think that punks are making millions while serious musicians are starving, and I find it chilling to see them reap such undeserved success. I can learn to live with that, however. What grates me is finding a column dedicated to this trash in an otherwise fine magazine. Punk rock has no connection with illustrated fiction, ENO (Electric Nothing Orchestra) has no ties to SF, and a rock critic has no place in your magazine. If you must have diatribe on this subject, conceive a rock periodical to do it in. Don't waste space in *Heavy Metal* on that bullshit. Punk fans don't pay your bills, SF supporters do. Your personal taste in "muzick" is of no interest to me, and I'd prefer you keep your mindless opinions to yourself, except when they deal with the true subject matter of your publication. The destruction of rock has no relationship with art of imaginative illustration, so why write about it? Your other columns are readily welcomed, but *please* drop the rock section. It's a waste of your time and my money.

In closing, I would like to express the hopes of anti-punks around the globe: May those who ride the "new wave" drown in it.

Rick Wemli
Little Falls, NJ

Gosh, Rick, the only thing that exceeds your arrogance is your ignorance. —TW

Editor:

I have been reading *Heavy Metal* for a year now, so I was delighted to read about another favorite of mine, Stephen King, in your January issue—such a nice way to start off the new year.

Having read every work by Mr. King, I am glad to see him getting the recognition and credit he deserves. What intrigues me most about King's work is his ability to take the commonplace and mold it into uncommon horror. He plays upon our fears and idiosyncrasies, leaving us with no safe haven. In King's introduction to *Night Shift*, he states that he dislikes having his feet hang over the bed at night. Now, thanks to King, many of his fans feel the same way.

Kim Paumer
Harrisburg, Pa

And, thanks to his many fans, King can now afford a bed big enough that his feet won't hang over the edge. —TW

Sirs:

I am disturbed by *Heavy Metal*'s changes in editorial policy. Though the quality of the four new columns seems quite good, I question their presence in this magazine. Since its beginning, *Heavy Metal* has been a *unique* venture: no other magazine published the same kind of material, and in such a "slick" format. It brought to America a new experience in narrative art and has become the major influence (and, I feel, the most respected experiment) in comics today (would Marvel have even *considered* its own versions before yours came?). The foundation of that uniqueness has been in your lengthy installments of foreign artists like Moebius, Druillet, Claveloux, Macedo, Bilal, Gal, Sire, and Montellier. Thus, to include reviews and articles—material already handled well by other magazines—can only *reduce* the content that makes your book different. In other words, this new policy decreases *Heavy Metal*'s uniqueness and only makes it more like other magazines on the market: its special strength is softened, and its "stand out" position blends into the pallid sameness of the crowd. One page of artwork lost is, in my opinion, a loss of what *HM* is—and only a gain of some other magazine's format, invariably weaker, or at least more familiar, than your own (even though you printed short stories before, some artwork was generally included with them). Therefore, I greatly fear the new editor's duty to "emphasize the written content . . . a little more than it has been" (and also the current emphasis on brief little "underground" pieces—like those of Stephen Stiles—the type of which, again, can be found elsewhere). Please do not soften your magazine's impact. It has no need to become like anything else. Keep it where it should be—at the top.

Albert Wendland
Pittsburgh, Pa

SIDEBAR: SF by Barry Malzberg

continued from page 5

of movies, a couple of writers, most of whom have published very little in the field since the 1950s? Doesn't anybody know or care what's really going on? The stylistic innovations of the last decade and a half, the enormous growth of the audience for all kinds of science fiction, the ten to fifteen modern science fiction writers who by any literary standard are absolutely first-rate? How about them? Doesn't anybody care?

Still, the questions are pervasive—another way of saying that they will not go away. Science fiction has prospered in the 1970s; in a largely debased form it has become big business for the media, but in a different way it has also flourished as literature. There are, in the United States, over one thousand people writing science fiction of publishable quality (ten years ago there were five hundred); over twelve hundred books labeled "science fiction" will be published this year (ten years ago it was five hundred); a good working professional can now receive a $20,000 advance for a novel, and six-figure advances are not unknown (ten years ago the highest advance *ever* paid for a science fiction novel labeled as such was $9,000. The level of ambition, the dazzling achievement of our best writers, the complexity and sophistication of a form that, in the memory of some of its best older writers, *did not exist* in their childhood: quite wondrous. The academicians will be sorting this out for decades

But still, for the general public, the 95 percent who do little reading of any sort, science fiction is a couple of television series, a handful of films, and four or five writers who were established well before 1950. Awareness of the category seems to be concentrated around a limited part of it; the rest of it is undiscovered.

This is sad and depressing but in itself no particular reason to complain. How many high school students could name five living American novelists, three living serious composers? How many have even heard of, say, the *Hudson Review*, let alone have ever seen it? What percentage of the classroom has ever voluntarily gone to a concert or a museum, opened *Ulysses* or *The Sun Also Rises*? It is a difficult world. If the students can name as many as five living science fiction writers, they are, whether I really like it or not, paying tribute to the field.

No, this is not what dismays me. Rather it is an after-the-fact perception: I think that science fiction may be in trouble because not only the mass media but its best practitioners *themselves* have a vested interest in the category being known by, and identified in the public mind with, *Star Wars*, "Mork and Mindy"s, Heinleins, Asimovs, and all that stuff floating around the cabin in *Alien*.

Why this is so—or, at least, why I *feel* this is so—would make for a very complex argument, extended over many a wearying and wavering paragraph, and I want to spare not only the readership but myself the struggle, so I will try to be concise. Science fiction, from its inception as a subcategory of American literature in 1926 until recently, was a small and largely ignored pursuit for its readers and writers alike; it was regarded with contempt (when it was regarded at all) and had almost no literary or intellectual cachet. This was monstrously unfair, to be sure, but it gave readers and writers (and editors and publishers, too) the feeling that they were collaborating in something vaguely disreputable and always contemptible. When extrinsic events—Hiroshima, television, the cold war, the media, *Sputnik*, the assassinations, the Apollo mission, the moon landing—caught up to the science fictional vision, when those events finally *forced* the larger public to grudgingly accept science fiction as serious business after all, most of the proponents of the field were still caught up in feelings of exclusion. The enormously successful science fiction of the last decade has been known by most serious followers of the field to be poor science fiction, often *dreadful* science fiction. . . but better popularity and acceptance than a return to the 1940s when it was impossible for anyone within the field to be taken seriously, as reader or writer, by anyone without.

So science fiction will probably succeed and dominate the '80s on the basis of its worst, or at least weaker, possibilities.

This is too bad. But I don't blame a soul. I know the feeling. Peace at any price. ●

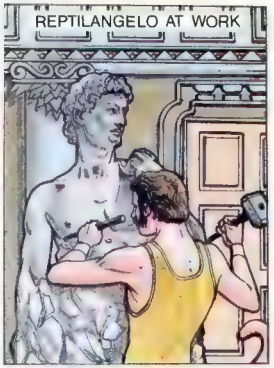
SF by Steve Brown

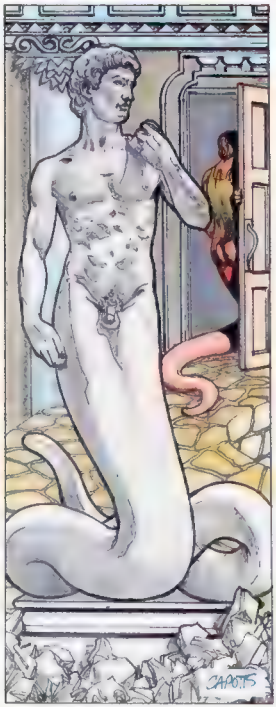
continued from page 5

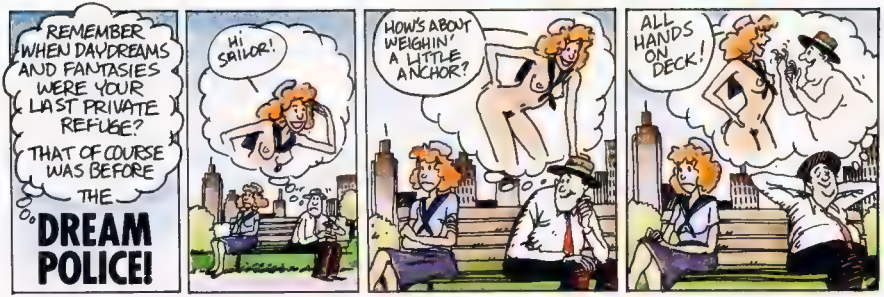
the true extent of Orr's power and spends the bulk of the book trying to remake the world into his own vision of utopia. Naturally it isn't that easy, and we come to the central theme of the story: It is just as dangerous for a benevolent man to possess ultimate power as it would be for a Hitler. And then there is the counterpoint subtheme: In the conflict between the Eastern passive acceptance of the world as it is and the arrogant Western assumption that everything is there to be changed, it is the Western attitude that seems to be destructive.

When I first read the book many years ago I was entranced by the constant rearranging of reality. I even interpreted the book as a gentle parody of that master of rubber reality, Philip K. Dick. Shortly after I read the book, I met Le Guin and self-importantly accused her of parodying Dick (in retrospect, it was more a case of a fan desperately trying to think of something to say to an admired writer). Quite rightly, she got slightly huffy and said, "Parody Phil Dick? I wouldn't *dream* of such a thing. *The Lathe of Heaven* was written as an *homage* to Dick."

Upon rereading the book, the truth of her statement is embarrassingly evident. There is no parody here, but instead an assimilation of the thoughts and techniques of Philip Dick. The book contains many Dickian elements: the harried "little man" who just wants to live an unbothered life, the constantly shifting template of reality, and the underlying conflict between Eastern and Western philosophies. This conflict is a major point in common with Dick and Le Guin, as she is an active Taoist and utilizes






REMEMBER WHEN DAYDREAMS AND FANTASIES WERE YOUR LAST PRIVATE REFUGE?
THAT OF COURSE WAS BEFORE THE
DREAM POLICE!
HI SAILOR!
HOW'S ABOUT WEIGHIN' A LITTLE ANCHOR?
ALL HANDS ON DECK!

its themes throughout her work. There is also that inimitably wry Dickian humor, seen here in the strange, all-powerful aliens who end up as the proprietors of small junk shops, and in the woman who with chaos crashing around her (the city melting, the mountain erupting, everything unstable and changing) says, "Nothing seems to go quite right today." The book is an impeccably realized gesture of respect from one writer to another and a gripping reading experience on its own.

The movie was perhaps as well-made as is possible, given a budget well below the megabuck range. There were only a few irritations. I flinched whenever an alien appeared, invariably knee-deep in clouds of dry ice. The acting left a lot to be desired, particularly Orr's flaccid delivery of an emotionally laden line like, "I didn't mean to kill her." But on the whole it was a superb effort. Screenwriters Roger E. Swaybill and Diane English deserve commendations for a successful adaptation of a difficult book.

The special effects in *The Lathe of Heaven* were done by cinema wizard Ed Emshwiller (also known as one of SF's top illustrators twenty years ago). Emshwiller used implication more than delineation. The alien invasion of the moon was done as a semi-abstract video effect that seemed superficially crude but very effective. In a day when production companies are spending the gross national product of Argentina in an effort to show every bolt, every dial, and every silicon chip, Emshwiller is pointing the way toward an impressionistic technique of handling events difficult to film. If this catches on, it could cut an SF film's budget to a fraction and free the filmmakers to concentrate on telling a good story about interesting people (something we have yet to see in an SF movie). Of course it would require a much stronger artistic effort on the part of the effects people. Rather than clever technicians, studios would have to search for artists with the vision of an Emshwiller to keep the effects looking appropriate rather than merely cheap. But then, artistic vision is the name of the game.

The Lathe of Heaven is the only genuine adult-level SF movie I have seen. It is the vindication of a lifetime's complaining and hoping. Yet I found the movie to be no more than . . . adequate. As thoughtfully made as it was, it remains only a cursory sketch of the novel.

For instance, the character of Haber, a driven man with a vast talent for self-deceit and motives too complex for his own understanding, regresses into a mere (in the words of one of the characters in the book) "mad scientist with an infernal machine." The character of Heather Lelache, a tough lawyer with a soft core carefully hidden under strong defense mechanisms, who gradually and awkwardly falls in love with Orr, is reduced to little more than a "love interest," a placeholder in a necessary plot slot.

The story itself is stripped to its basics. Most of Orr's effective dreams are cut, leaving only a few of the most crucial. Thus, a painfully elaborate process of trial and error and gradual realization (the core of the relationship between Orr and Haber) is reduced to a sketch, and doesn't allow Haber any room for development beyond the "mad scientist." The most critical scenes in the book are Haber's own effective dream in which he attempts to right all of the injustices humanity is heir to at once, and his failure, which thoroughly scrambles reality and is presented in the movie as a series of striking but meaningless and abstract laser effects. The viewer knows that *something* serious is happening but hasn't the slightest idea what.

There are nuances and implications in prose that cannot be put onto film. For example, Le Guin was able to convey the far-reaching effects of Haber's final dream with a simple throwaway line: "The Kitchen Sink was popular for its sturdy wares and fair prices. Since the Break, housewives, refurnishing the unexpected kitchens they had found themselves cooking in that evening in April, had come in increasing numbers." (The quote refers to a small kitchenware shop built up after the breakdown of all major industry following Haber's dream. The discontinuity of the dream is referred to as the Break.)

This is something that couldn't be accurately represented in film. (A montage of weird kitchens? Hordes of housewives hunting for replacement utensils? But that would focus too much attention on kitchens. The idea is that *everything* radically changed, and the kitchens are used as an example.) Yet the line economically conveys the fact that Haber's dream affected society on every level.

Nor could the following exchange have the same meaning on film without the power of Le Guin's interpretive description:

> The lips within the curly beard parted in a straining, staring smile, a grin of ecstacy that made Orr turn away as if he had seen something never meant to be seen, both terrifying and pathetic. "Then this world will be like heaven, and men will be like gods!"
>
> "We are, we are already," Orr said, but the other paid no heed.

Nor can the tiny touches of the following sort of perception be adequately done on film, the kind of touches that can make the difference between a real relationship and a bit of playacting: "They said nothing of any importance. They washed up the dishes and went to bed. In bed, they made love. Love doesn't just sit there, like a stone, it has to be made, like bread; remade all the time, made new."

Film is a completely different form of art than written fiction. The kind of subtleties that can be done in film can't be done in prose, and vice versa. A truly successful SF movie should and must be written for the screen with the writer and filmmakers working hand in hand. After years of waiting to see it done, I now believe that a really good SF novel is inherently unfilmable. It is difficult to collapse a reading experience that might have taken ten hours or more, spread out over several days, into a two-hour screenplay without reducing a book full of subliminal activity into a string of sensational highlights.

This also applies to illustrated books. The author will spend a lot of time carefully setting up a scene to the point where the reader's imagination can take over. Then, when it is illustrated, the reader's imagination is robbed of the experience of envisioning the scene. This is not to say that illustrated SF (whether filmed or drawn) is necessarily a bad idea but that *adaptations* of written works are a bad idea. To be successful, a movie (or a *Heavy Metal*-style illustrated story) must be a collaboration between writer and illustrator/filmmaker

YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR LEWD FANTASIES IN A PUBLIC PLACE!
DR
"AND INVOLVING AN INNOCENT PARTY SHAME ON YOU!!
NICE WORK, CONSTABLE!.

from the beginning. The writer will purposely leave areas undescribed for the illustrator to draw, and the filmmaker will flesh out a character undescribed with an actor's presence.

As I write, the TV production of Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* has yet to be aired. I look forward to this with trepidation. Bradbury's prose is so poetic, and the actual events of his stories so subservient to the mood, that I quail to think what the merciless eye of the camera will do to them. Stripping away Bradbury's prose and filming just the story lines seems to me like filming an opera without the music.

Philip K. Dick is a strange, haunted, and disturbed man. He sees the world as a malleable illusion that changes and adjust itself to its inhabitants' perceptions. He lives out there on the dark edge, teetering above the abyss where his fiction lies. Often (particularly in his harrowing masterpiece, *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*) he slides completely over that edge.

Dick has codified paranoia into literature to a degree that few other writers have approached. His novels are populated with desperate people fighting to be left alone. The most obvious everyday objects take on a malevolent intelligence: the toaster argues with you, the TV set in the corner is a disguised killing machine, your door won't let you out until you pay it a nickel. Characteristic of most of Dick's fiction is the sudden realization by the protagonist that the most elementary aspects of reality are lies: it isn't 1984, it's 2018; it isn't Mars after all, it's a jail cell on Earth; your most trusted friend is actually assigned to monitor your every activity.

Few people, myself included, want to spend thirty-five novels living inside the mind of a paranoid. But Dick is much more than that. He is a sketchily educated man of the streets with all the posturings, the incomplete comprehension of process, the dwelling on the trendy, and the awkward, slang-ridden language that that implies. Yet he has areas of great erudition, such as the Eastern philosophy that runs through his fiction like a vein of ore. He has written some of the bleakest, most terrifying novels I have ever read, yet his surreal sense of humor is never absent.

The whole bundle of contradictions that makes up Philip K. Dick can be seen in his lengthy introductory essay to *The Golden Man*, a new collection of previously unanthologized short stories. Here we see him delivering succinct and biting analyses of his own work, shamelessly name-dropping, calmly telling us of his deepest loves and most agonizing tragedies, wandering off on anecdotal tangents, and throwing it all, finally, against a backdrop of closely reasoned interpretations of Buddhist precepts.

This book serves as a worthy introduction to Philip K. Dick, both the writer and the man. The stories included span all of Dick's varied interests and compulsions. Here you will meet the nervous little people with which Dick populates his novels (no heroes here.) Dick's characters struggle for a chance to be left alone in the face of a universe that seems to be directly attacking them. The dialogue is alternately facile and stumblingly awkward as the characters sweat and struggle over the task of articulation. The peculiar distortions of reality that Dick has staked out as his own territory show up in every story: an alien pinball machine that learns how to attack the player, the living book cover that subtly changes the text of the book to conform to its own perceptions, the product that not only advertises itself but moves in with you and refuses to leave you alone until you sign the papers.

More than most writers, Philip K. Dick has the ability to directly convert his own feelings into fiction. In his introduction to *The Golden Man*, he says, "People have told me that everything about me, every facet of my life, psyche, experiences, dreams, and fears are laid out explicitly in my writing, that from the corpus of my work I can be absolutely and precisely inferred. This is true."

Dick's fiction is so eccentrically his own that it is not easily appreciated by those unfamiliar with him. *The Golden Man*, though the stories are far from all top drawer, should serve as an excellent introduction (in particular his introduction and his notes on the individual stories). This is a volume of great value for students of Dick (several of the stories are embryonic versions of later novels) and a fascinating window into the writer's peculiar world view.

Here is a passage that illustrates Dick's delight in taking a mundane scene, a simple description, and slowly twisting reality straight off its axis. The scene is from "King of the Elves" and concerns a character's slow realization that his best friend is a troll:

> Shadrach looked down at Phineas' hand on his arm. He had not been that close to Phineas in years.
>
> Shadrach contemplated the hand. He wrinkled his brow, puzzled.
>
> Phineas' hand was huge and rough and his arms were short. His fingers were blunt; his nails broken and cracked. Almost black, or so it seemed in the moonlight.
>
> Shadrach looked up at Phineas. "Strange," he murmured.
>
> "What's strange, Shadrach?"
>
> In the moonlight, Phineas' face seemed oddly heavy and brutal. Shadrach had never noticed before how the jaw bulged, what a great protruding jaw it was. The skin was yellow and coarse, like parchment. Behind the glasses, the eyes were like two stones, cold and lifeless. The ears were immense, the hair stringy and matted.
>
> Odd that he had never noticed before. But he had never seen Phineas in the moonlight.
>
> Shadrach stepped away, studying his old friend. From a few feet off, Phineas Judd seemed unusually short and squat. His legs were slightly bowed. His feet were enormous. And there was something else—
>
> "What is it?" Phineas demanded, beginning to grow suspicious. "Is there something wrong?"
>
> Something was completely wrong. And he had never noticed it, not in all the years they had been friends. All around Phineas Judd was an odor, a faint, pungent stench of rot, of decaying flesh, damp and moldy.

The Golden Man, by Philip K. Dick, Berkley Books, February 1980, $2.25

The Lathe of Heaven, by Ursula Le Guin, Avon, January 1980 (movie edition), $1.95

The Heavy Metal Bookshelf: A Universe of Fantasy

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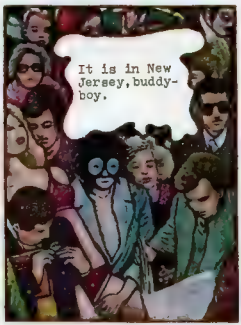
And so, in the winter, as the atmosphere began to crystallize into billions of tiny particles, I left "La Mall" forever, carrying the plaster corpse of Quintana Roo.
Her nonexistence no longer seemed so desperately important if all life on earth was about to end...



FLIX by Bhob

continued from page 5

Bilal, and Caza. For the Fantastic Realism in his films not only has a perceptual fine tuning akin to the best of *Heavy Metal*/*Metal Hurlant*, the scope is equally international. Skolimowski may not be prolific, but he has become the world traveler of moviedom. Like a filmic Olympian, this vaulting Pole has displayed his precise form in one country after another, cinematically flexing first in Poland, gaining impetus in Belgium, and soaring in England. Arriving in this country, he seemed less interested in promoting *The Shout* than in launching his first American project, a modernization of *Crime and Punishment* possibly set in Boston. "An exciting prospect," as John Dean phrased it.

We were at the Orson Welles Cinema in Cambridge, Massachusetts, sitting upstairs in the offices, which were abandoned and empty because of a holiday, while the crowds beneath us milled about between showings of Herzog's *Nosferatu*. Skolimowski was in Boston scouting *Crime and Punishment* locations. "The first idea was to make it British, but then I thought that the British ambiance doesn't have that dark side of the elegant facade. Perhaps Dublin has got it, but not London. London is very optimistic to me. I would like to see that crime committed in a very, very elegant stylistic but still modern background. And here I am in Boston to have a look at the town, and I'm very impressed. I've got good feelings of what I've seen. I've been running around for two days now, and there are some great, great, great things in this town. So I'm very much driving toward the idea of setting the film here in Boston with an American cast, and it may come very soon. *The Shout* was like a confirmation that I'm able to make a film—as for many years I wasn't making any films—and I think that however the film is received, one has to say, 'Well, it's done; it's well made.' For some of the audience, it may not be an acceptable way of making films."

And for others it may be *very* acceptable. Listen, I've got to communicate to you, right at the start of this round, what I like so much about Skolimowski's movies. When he entered the ring in the mid sixties his elliptical style made him a man ahead of his time and a film festival favorite. But as we move into the eighties, he could easily become a molten-hot commercial director; there's a heavy, metallic audience waiting. (I know you're out there. Because of overpopulation I can hear you breathing.) The terms "Godardesque" or "Godardian" were often applied to his films, when, in truth, he has a uniquely personal, allusive approach and a fine, intuitive eye for the graphic design elements of pictorial compositions in movement.

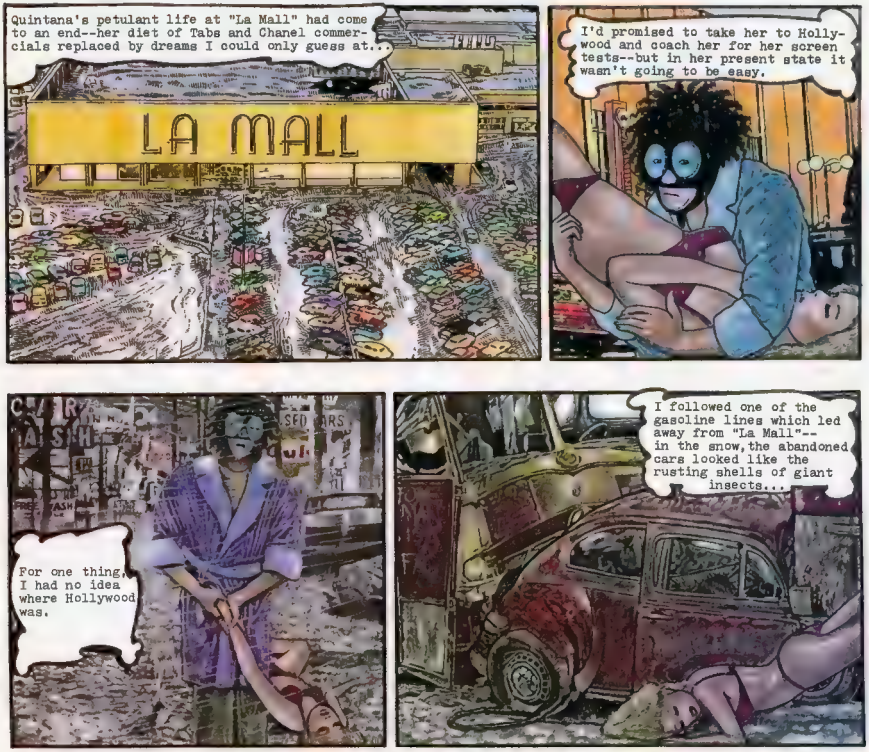
Reversing the usual procedure of establishing long shots, he often maneuvers in close for an opening punch that leaves the viewer bewildered and staggering, as in *The Shout* when Anthony Fielding (John Hurt) is

introduced with tight close-ups showing the creation of aural effects—steel balls rolling on a metal sheet, a taut string pulled across the jagged edge of an opened can, a match flaring near a microphone—all seen *before* we are shown the entire sound studio and realize that Fielding is an electronic composer.

Sometimes the wider, explanatory view is eliminated entirely, as in a late sixties Skolimowski scene of a sidewalk vendor parked at the foot of an immense, exterior staircase. Throughout the shot, a ball, origin unknown, bounces its way down the stairs and eventually out of frame, witnessed by the audience but not by the characters. Skolimowski's concern for such coincidentals is one of the reasons so many writers have described his work as "surreal," when actually it's just an effort on his part to capture the strangeness that exists in real life while obliquely increasing the main dramatic tensions. Where most filmmakers would concentrate solely on the linear progression of the narrative, Skolimowski adds apparently irrelevant details that, by the very act of inclusion, take on significance. They become meaningful coincidences, what Jung called "synchronicity" and defined as "the simultaneous occurrence of two meaningfully but not causally connected events."

Arthur Koestler took a decidedly unmystical look at synchronicity in his book *The Roots of Coincidence*, examining quantum physics for a possible solution. Skolimowski also rejects mysticism in describing his artistic process of dramatizing and editing these juxtapositions. "I haven't done it based theoretically on Jung, but that's my natural way of seeing things. I'm very much aware of all those coincidental things that follow us through life, but I don't treat them as mystic. That's a funny thing, because my imagination was trained with poetry. When you use words it comes much easier than when you use images, because images must be a precise illustration of the imagination. When I see those things in life I know that those are the perfect illustrations of the poem that is not written by myself but written by my life. Some things are put down pretty clear, and then it comes to the certain "scrapbook" that I very much believe in. This is the significance of the character, not the mysticism, but the tension produced by a certain person. Perhaps I'm just looking for some of those effects, and therefore, much more aware of it. And then, naturally, I'm putting them into the film: the dog knocking over the milk bottle or the bird suddenly flying in front of the camera."

If you blink, you might miss the single second when the bird, seemingly from nowhere, flies through a doorway inside the Fieldings' house in *The Shout*. This was not in the original script, but, after the first take of this scene, Skolimowski felt he "should give an impulse," a suggestion that something was about to happen to the characters. Skolimowski and the cast and crew then waited for a bird to be brought from a pet shop forty miles away before shooting the second take of the same scene. The carefully staged dog/milk bottle shot in *The Shout*, not intended as symbolism, recalls the accidents sometimes seen in other Skolimowski films. "I was using some accidental events like the dog knocking over the bottle. It can happen,


Quintana's petulant life at "La Mall" had come to an end--her diet of Tabs and Chanel commercials replaced by dreams I could only guess at...
LA MALL
I'd promised to take her to Hollywood and coach her for her screen tests--but in her present state it wasn't going to be easy.
For one thing, I had no idea where Hollywood was.
I followed one of the gasoline lines which led away from "La Mall"--in the snow, the abandoned cars looked like the rusting shells of giant insects...

Hey, you want a ride?
Can I bring my girl friend? She's sort of dead.
How dead is she? Should we take her to the hospital?
No--she's definitely dead. I need to find a computer lab so I can wire her back together.
We've got one at home--want to see it?
Well, don't just stand there, hop in the back!

and when it happens in life, we see it as a natural thing. If you put it on film, people search for the significance, which I don't mind. But I'm not putting any significance into it. I just think that's the right illustration of the emotions I'm trying to create. Whatever you think about the dog knocking over the bottle, that's right."

His films also possess an art power that extends beyond the confines of theaters. I first noticed this effect years ago, leaving the New York Film Festival after seeing ***Walkover*** (1965). No ball bounced down the sunlit Lincoln Center steps; instead, the myriad, unrelated details of life in the NYC streets interweaved and connected before me, and I realized that Skolimowski's fantastic imagery had, quite literally, triggered a temporary alteration of my perception of the real world. Surely it is this kind of reaction that explains why the French film historian Georges Sadoul called Skolimowski "obviously one of the most significant filmmaking talents to emerge in the sixties, a director with an idiosyncratic vision of the pressures of modern urban life."

Odd then that apart from ***The Shout*** (winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the Cannes Fest) and the critical/commercial success of ***Deep End*** (1970), so much of Skolimowski's past output sits on shelves and isn't seen much these days, while Skolimowski himself remains something of an unknown quantity. Born May 5, 1938, in Warsaw, he went to Warsaw University, where he studied ethnography, fought as a boxer, and graduated in 1959, having seen his poetry and short stories from this period published. On the advice of Poland's leading filmmaker, Andrzej Wajda (***Kanal***, ***Ashes and Diamonds***), he entered the Polish film school at Lódź in 1960. He collaborated with Wajda on the screenplay of Wajda's 1960 ***Niewinni czarodzieje*** (***Innocent Sorcerers***), which features the young Roman Polanski as an actor. In 1961 Skolimowski made ***Boxing***, a documentary, as a school project. After teaming with Polanski on the screenplay of the 1962 ***Nóż w wodzie*** (***Knife in the Water***), Polanski's first feature as a director, Skolimowski linked together his film-school exercises in 1964 to create ***Rysopis*** (***Identification Marks: None***) about a student, André Leszczyc (Skolimowski), and the events of his last day before joining the army. In ***Walkover*** Skolimowski again portrayed Leszczyc, seen ten years later as a boxing hustler making a living by fighting beginners in amateur competitions.

He next demonstrated the full potency of his gift for visual legerdemain, showing the differences between the generations in Poland while depicting Warsaw as an alien landscape in ***Barrier*** (1961). In several ways the film's bizarre shifts and turns greatly resemble one of the best American motion pictures from that same period, Arthur Penn's ***Mickey One*** (1965). ***Barrier*** involved a great deal of improvisation. Skolimowski arrived on the set each day with only a sketchy outline of what was to be done. He tape-recorded the actors' improvised rehearsals, turned these tapes into written transcripts, and then edited the transcripts, shortening scenes so that the final take of a given shot was sometimes half the length of the first take. Critic David Wilson, pointedly ignoring Polanski, said, "With ***Barrier*** Jerzy

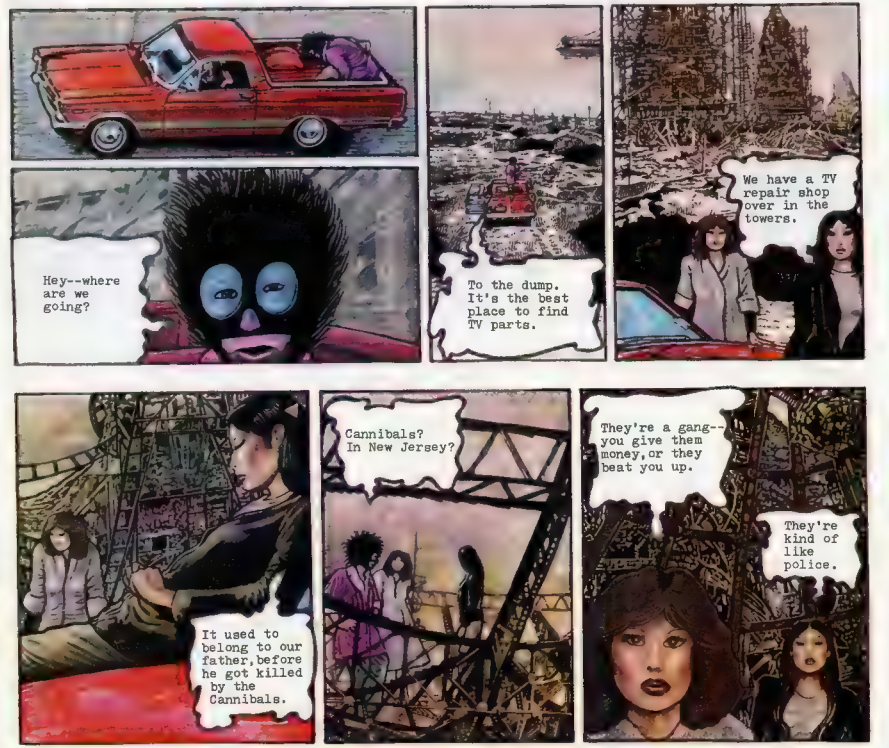
Skolimowski decisively confirms his promise as the most exciting talent to come out of Poland since the days of Wajda and Munk. And if one says that *Barrier* is paradoxically both romantic and as hard as nails, that is only to confirm it as a devastating allegory of the Polish state of mind."

He left Poland to make a French-language film, *Le Départ*, in Brussels. With Jean-Pierre Léaud as Marc, an impulsive nineteen year old obsessed with stealing a Porsche in order to enter an automobile race, *Le Départ* is alive with vibrant comic inventions and strange surprises, all a natural extension of Marc/Léaud's nervous energy. (When Léaud showed Skolimowski a kinky, self-mutilation shtick, putting a needle through his own hand without pain or bleeding, the director incorporated the bit into the story line as Marc's bar stunt to impress a girl.) *Negative Space* author Manny Farber found Léaud the "only one. . .with any sense of physical impact," describing the actor as suggesting "a pair of scissors gone angrily out of control." Marc goes to an automobile show where throngs genuflect in the glitter—it's a high-tech religious rite—while a percussive Komeda jazz score (recorded by Kenny Clarke, Gato Barbieri, René Utreger, Don Cherry, and others) punctuates the film's slick and polished visual sheen. It would be nice to see *Le Départ* again, double-billed perhaps with a Godard or Truffaut, but it's very rarely revived.

Skolimowski returned to Poland in 1967, continuing the saga of antihero André Leszczyc in *Rece do gory* (*Hands Up!*), "a provocation about political and social problems in Poland." The film was completed and awaiting release shortly before 1968, when purges in the Polish film industry caused it to be banned—an unfortunate suppression, since Skolimowski once called it "a trip in the imagination. . .my best and most mature film." After he and Léaud were reunited in Czechoslovakia for *Dialogue* (1968), he directed *The Adventures of Gerard* (1970), a British-Italian-Swiss co-production of frenetic black humor and Napoleonic cinematic chaos based on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Brigadier Gerard stories

Unlike *Le Départ*, the sinister poetry of *Deep End* does turn up in revival houses. Partially shot in Munich, it's set amid the lust and corruption of a seedy London bathhouse and pool where an innocent youth (John Moulder-Brown) falls into a downward spiral of obsession for a cruel coworker (Jane Asher) to the accompaniment of Cat Stevens . The minatory details of the finale, the swimming pool seduction leading to the girl's death, are staged as a geometric progression of nightmare circumstances. This is capped by the final shot, an underwater ballet of necrophilic horror. (And this closing sequence alone indicates why Skolimowski's *Crime and Punishment* will be eagerly anticipated.)

There was a trip back to Poland to reedit *Hands Up!*, hoping for a 1971 release, and he then returned to Munich to make *King, Queen, Knave* (1972), a West German-USA coproduction based on Vladimir Nabokov's 1968 novel, with Gina Lollobrigida, David Niven, and John Moulder-Brown caught up in a romantic triangle and a subplot involving the invention of an erotic artificial skin to be


Hey--where are we going?
To the dump. It's the best place to find TV parts.
We have a TV repair shop over in the towers.
It used to belong to our father, before he got killed by the Cannibals.
Cannibals? In New Jersey?
They're a gang--you give them money, or they beat you up.
They're kind of like police.

I followed them into the towers--mounds of collapsed cement studded with broken bottles,ringed by beer cans and swaying fire escapes.
These used to be expensive condos for senior citizens.
LIQUIDAÇÃO
Now the only thing left is our store.
Come on--the computer's in the back.
I haven't seen one like this since I was a kid.

used in the manufacture of lifelike mannequins. The critical consensus was that this was a most Nabokovian film, that Skolimowski, the new champ, had bested even Kubrick (*Lolita*) in faithfully bringing Nabokov to the screen.

Skolimowski, however, with a wave of his hand, dismissed it. "The problem is that I really have to be involved in my work. When I'm trying to do just the professional job, to be done, I'm making bad films like *King, Queen, Knave*, *The Adventures of Gerard*, and a couple of others. I was just employed, no involvement at all, no passion. Horrible laziness, which I couldn't overcome by any interest. It wasn't very pleasurable to make those films. Now when I'm involved, as in *Deep End* and *The Shout*, as in some of my Polish films, then I can really produce a lot of energy, and it's natural." *King, Queen, Knave*, a film many Nabokov readers might want to see, vanished into The Great Film Vault Limbo without explanation. (It did have a 1979 NYC booking, but what about the rest of the country?)

Skolimowski vanished from the scene also, and six years passed before he reappeared, articulating the Dolby scream of *The Shout*, based on a 1924 Robert Graves short story about an asylum inmate who claims his shout can kill—yet another example that short stories, leaving room for directorial embellishments, can often be more rewarding sources for feature films than novels. (Novels demand a longer format, as with ABC's "Novels for Televison" and "Masterpiece Theatre," or as Erich von Stroheim attempted to demonstrate in 1924 with his forty-two reel, nine-hour *Greed*, adapted page by page from Frank Norris's *McTeague*. (*San Francisco Daily News* drama critic Idwal Jones, one of the few people to ever see *Greed* in its entirety, prophetically wrote, "We wonder if pictures will ever be shown on the installment plan. . .a very thoughtful idea, we think.")

In the psychological undercurrents of *The Shout* Skolimowski again showed his superb skill with actors, guiding Alan Bates to convincingly interpret the death-shouting Crossley as a psychopathic mindfucker who completely believes his own wild claims (whether they are true or not). Susannah York also has some delicious transitional moments whenever she is suddenly possessed by Crossley's aboriginal magic. The producer of *The Shout* is Jeremy Thomas, and his obvious interest in allowing directors to explore new avenues of highly visual, unconventional narrative structures makes him a producer to watch during the eighties; he's also the man behind the *Crime and Punishment* project and Nicolas Roeg's current film, the stylistically fragmented *Bad Timing* (with Art Garfunkel as a psychoanalyst who has an explosive romantic affair in Vienna).

Skolimowski was most enthusiastic when discussing the components of Crossley's shout, an awesome, theater-vibrating moment that mixed forty-eight tracks and used "airplanes, Niagara Falls, shooting a pistol straight at the microphone, the moon rocket, some strange noises, plus all the most sophisticated equipment of the rock groups, synthesizers, white noise, pink noise. Technically, we tried to cover all possible frequencies of annoying sounds. The human voice shout, which is the mainstream of the

sound, only covers a very narrow amplitude of the sound, so we had to get all the bottoms and all the tops of all possible vibrations. Therefore, there were some incredible sounds—putting a piece of chalk on glass with those terribly high frequencies—awful sounds, really. Dolby Stereo at least guaranteed that you would be shocked by that sound, a sound that you were never expecting to hear. If it is screened properly, it is really something."

Skolimowski doesn't care for science fiction, although the imaginative profundities of the Polish science fictioneer Stanislaw Lem (*Solaris, Memoirs Found in a Bathtub*) are an exception: "Lem is great; he's got a couple of very good things. The film of *Solaris* is disappointing, terrible." Instead, he leans toward a notion that "you can have such a science fiction in real life." As our conversation came to an end, I asked for an example of this, and he recounted an extraordinary incident that had happened only three days earlier. "After the New York opening of *The Shout*, we were talking with some friends, and I wasn't too happy because the screening wasn't technically too good. I was trying to check it during the screening, and some noises came from the speakers. So I was pretty upset. We went with some friends to the restaurant Elaine's, the kind of place where film people go these days in New York, and we sat at the table that was reserved for us. Some very nice people. . .Woody Allen was there. I was sort of sitting like this, and I said, 'You make an effort, you make films, you do the physical work, the brain work, and you have good results and have it in the can. Now just to screen it in the proper conditions, and you are happy. But if it is not screened properly, then I am unhappy, as I am, and I think *all* the work I've done was for nothing; it was just wasted and then will soon be forgotten —and probably already.' And I said, 'My first film, a Polish film that was called *Rysopis* in Polish and *Identification Marks: None* in English—ridiculous title—is already forgotten.' I was pointing up. Then the person who was sitting in front of me—it was Harvey Keitel—said, 'What did you say? *Rysopis* or *Identification Marks: None*? You are pointing at the poster of that film.' It was over my head. I didn't see it. I was pointing like this, and he was sitting in front of me, so he was facing the wall And I turned like this, and there it was: *RYSOPIS/* FILM BY SKOLIMOWSKI/*IDENTIFICATION MARKS NONE.* Isn't that science fiction?"

Jung would have called it synchronicity

16MM FILM RENTAL GUIDE

Some titles mentioned above (*Barrier, Deep End, The Shout, Kanal, Ashes and Diamonds, Knife in the Water, Lolita*) are available in 16mm from Films, Inc. (440 Park Ave. South, NYC 10016). For *Walkover* and *Rysopis*, contact New Yorker Films (43 W. Sixty-first St., NYC 10023), for *Mickey One*, Audio Brandon (34 MacQuesten Parkway South, Mt. Vernon, NY 10550), and for *The Adventures of Gerard*, UA16 (729 Seventh Ave., NYC 10019) ●

I'll have to redesign the graphic display.
Hey kids!
Um..I don't know.
How long are you planning to use it for?
Well, you better learn how to fix TV's pretty fast.
After dinner, my new employers practiced disco dancing in front of the TV.
Long after they'd gone to sleep, I was still awake, feverishly working out programs for testing thermoplastic skin conduction--
--while off in the distance, the Cannibals raced their engines...

To Be Continued

COMIX by Jay Kinney

continued from page 4

Similarly, many of the young giants of comic books in the forties (Jack Cole, Will Eisner, Klaus Nordling, and later Harvey Kurtzman) were multitalented. Both the strips and the books in their boom eras were loose and untried enough that cartoonists could experiment, follow through on oddball ideas, and push the early limits of the medium. Most of the language and conventions of comic art we now take for granted were developed in those circumstances.

However, by Eisenhower's second term comic art was stagnating. Perhaps it was the advent of TV drawing attention away from paper entertainment. Perhaps it was the stifling fifties complacency, or just the passage of time. Whatever, many of the classic newspaper strips were now produced by the assistants (or assistants' assistants!) of the original creators. Newer strips tended to laud the merits of postwar suburban family life ("Hi and Lois") or wallow in TV-like soap bathos ("Rex Morgan, M.D.," "Judge Parker," etc.).

Comic books, under the stern gaze of the Comics Code Authority, increasingly assumed a solely juvenile readership. As comic production was broken down into an "efficient" assembly line of specialized tasks (writer, letterer, penciller, inker, colorist, etc.) "cartoonist" increasingly came to mean at best a fine draftsman, at worst a stylistic hack and technician. Somewhere in the shuffle the original spark was lost.

And that wasn't all. American culture in general was at a crisis point as the sixties ensued. With the government mired in a no-win war in Asia and the limits of economic expansion beginning to appear, the gap between reality and popular myth was widening.

Popular culture depends for its existence on its ability to respond to the lives and dreams of its society — sometimes expressing and sometimes exploiting them, but always interacting. Comic art as pop culture

was failing to reflect reality as experienced by the growing youth culture of the sixties.

Faced with the draft, Vietnam, and God at the front door (thanks to LSD), increasing numbers of kids were having trouble relating to, say, "Steve Canyon." Millions wanted to escape suburbia, nationalism, and the misery of daily life rather than celebrate them. The counterculture developed as a mass subculture of alienation, and comics like Marvel's neurotic "Spiderman," coming from a different generation, didn't quite capture it. ("Dr. Strange" perhaps came

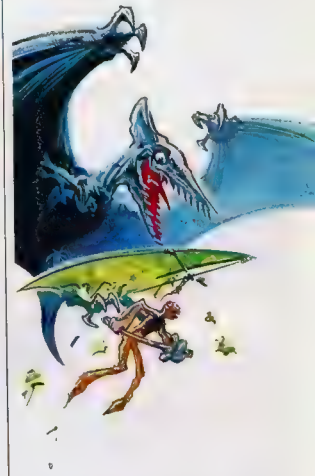
closest but was an exception and not the rule.)

It's in this context that underground comix arose. Initially drawn for UG papers and then done for small hip publishers (or self-published), the comics came directly out of the counterculture. The UG cartoonists, unprofessional and untrained in most cases, both drew what was around them and delved into their unconsciousnesses for material that came to them courtesy of the same drugs and circumstances enjoyed by their friends. Whereas Marvel's "Sgt. Fury" eternally fought World War II and Mort Walker's "Beetle Bailey" slumbered away at Camp Swampy, Ted Richards's "Dopin' Dan" cracked jokes for 'Nam vets and draftees. Similarly, the Zen advice of Crumb's "Mr. Natural" seemed more to the point than that proferred by "Mary Worth."

While there was never any formally stated philosophy of the UGs, one can look back and find recurring themes: drug use and experiences, explicit sex, antiwar and anti-authoritarian politics, gut-wrenching violence, personal candor and autobiography, and much social satire. If straight society supported something, the comix tended to revel in the opposite. The images and emotions were strong, shocking, and impolite, a form of guerrilla theater in print.

However, while they had one foot in the counterculture the UG cartoonists had the other foot firmly planted in the traditions of comic art. They may not have begun that way — a good many of the artists were oblivious to most prior comics before they stumbled into the field — but the nature of the UG comics scene soon changed that.

By the beginning of the seventies most of

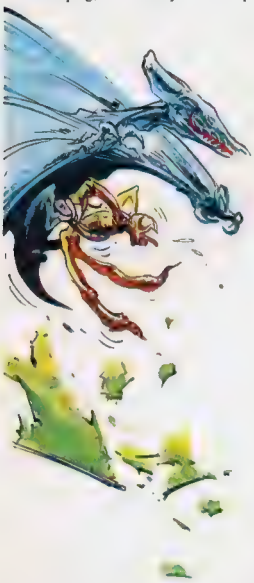


the cartoonists had moved to San Francisco. And in the hothouse atmosphere of a tight social scene they continued to draw even as the original counterculture fanned out and evaporated. There was strong group pressure to make each strip one did better than the last, and the way one improved was to study the masters and draw, draw, draw. Some looked to the old ECs, others to the strip artists of the thirties, and others to specific artists outside of comics altogether. But everyone learned, trading knowledge and discoveries back and forth. Once again cartoonists were "doing it all" in comic books, and the assembly line had been eluded.

Sales steadily grew for the first three or four years of the new decade and the cartoonists encouraged each other to experiment. Nonlinear narratives, perspective alterations, poetry, and primitivism, as well as plenty of more traditional jokes and plot lines, were all tried. Some worked splendidly, others failed miserably, and many of the attempts may have been lost on the readers altogether. But in any case, comics had become exciting again.

The latter half of the seventies was a time of consolidation for the UG artists and their publishers. The average quality of a UG comic today is higher as the cartoonists have polished the styles and approaches discovered in the earlier days of intense experimentation. Still dependent on non-newsstand, alternative distribution networks, the comix remain hard to find. Yet the UGs survive as a vital genre where cartoonists can speak in a more personal voice, delve deeper into dangerous territory, and enjoy more freedom than afforded in most mass circulation magazines.

Yet, perhaps inevitably, the UGs have become a minieastablishment in their own way as some new cartoonists have found the genre less open to new work than in the past, when an "anything goes" atmosphere prevailed. Through self-publishing and work for local publications new artists outside the UG are developing, and it may be left up to



many of them to revitalize comics the next time around.

Meanwhile, seeds planted by the UG have sprouted and borne fruit in a variety of places. As the comix made their way abroad they excited cartoonists particularly in England, Holland, and France. Partially inspired by American UGs, a new wave of comics for adults caught fire in Paris in the mid seventies. First the monthly *L'Echo des Savanes* (The Sound of the Jungle), then *Fluide Glacial* (Icy Fluid) and *Metal Hurlant* (Screaming Metal) appeared. *Heavy Metal*, in turn, has reprinted many of the new French cartoonists for an American audience and is helping to spread a tradition of adult comic fare with direct lineage in the Undergrounds.

While the newspaper strips and straight newsprint comics may be shrinking and fading, the growth of comic art in quality paperbacks and other formats indicates an intriguing evolution ahead for the art form.

Next month:
Part Five: From East to West

New Publications

With this section of the column I originally planned only to review new publications that seemed praiseworthy, as ignoring the bombs seemed, by implication, to be a sufficiently harsh critique. However, this policy tends to overlook new comix that are neither total successes nor total failures but worth discussing. For instance . . .

Commies from Mars #2 (1979, $1.25) has recently been published by Last Gasp in San Francisco. Kitchen Sink in Wisconsin published the first issue of this title back in 1973, but when editor Tim Boxell moved to the Bay Area a year ago from the Midwest the title and concept came with him.

And great title it is — summoning up visions of fifties red-scare flicks as well as greasy men's "sweat" magazines. If the first issue suffered from an inability to exploit the potential of such a title (indeed the contents were indistinguishable from those of most of Kitchen's anthology comics of that time), the new issue, ironically, suffers from sticking so literally to the premise of "Martian Marxists."

As fond as I am of political satire and as rich as the tradition of American anti-communist paranoia is as a potential target of such satire, *Commies from Mars* #2 bothers me far more than I had originally expected.

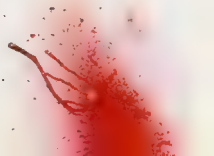
This time around *all* the strips inside tie into the title, the artists each taking off on the admitted absurdity of alien commies. So far, so good. Moreover, the three best strips in the book (by Doug Hansen, Greg Irons, and Boxell himself) not only revel in the absurdity but deliver their "messages" with a sophistication that successfully lampoons the human condition while sidestepping the temptation to wallow too much in mock clichés.

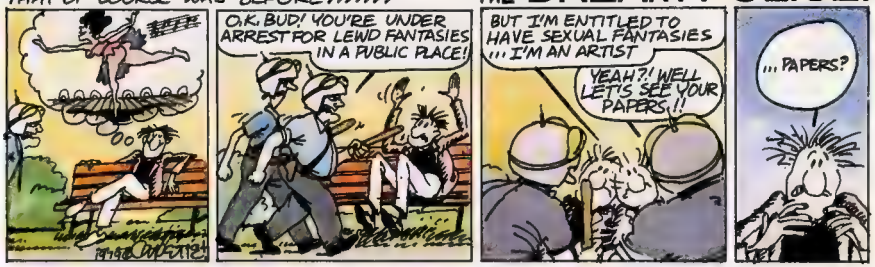
Hansen's untitled two-pager uses a silhouette approach to tell a snappy vignette of childhood paranoia. Irons has his Gregor the Ape character obsessively bemoaning his slavery to his gonads — a not uncommon male affliction attributable to . . . an alien commie plot? Boxell's "Commies from Mars Cafe" is a bad pun in sheep's clothing rescued at the end by a puckish satire of government red tape.

However, the remaining two-thirds of the comic, while competent enough, fails to go much of anywhere, or, in the case of Rich Larson's story "The Treaty," takes me places I've been to before and found repugnant. Hunt Emerson's "The Adventures of Alan Rabbit" and J. Michael Leonard's "12001: A Spaced Outessy" clock in at six pages each and while very different stylistically are amazingly similar in story line: futuristic hide-and-seek between earthlings and aliens. Leonard delivers a nice O'Henry-esque climax at the expense of a confusing beginning, while Emerson, a cartoonist for the British rock press, does throw in some flashy brushwork. A three-pager by Boxell, "Snak," involving a Martian "horse" eating a mutant reptile "baby" is mercifully brief.

But Larson's story, a six-pager and the meatiest in the book, is impossible to ignore. While it begins as a pointed and acerbic commentary on politicians and diplomatic give-and-take, "The Treaty" soon trades insights for easy cynicism. But worst of all, the story's subtheme of conflict between the male treaty signers and their female translator, which sets the stage for the story's shock ending, also allows Larson to give vent to a brutal fit of misogyny at the end, the likes of which have been largely absent from UGs over the last few years.

Larson's last-panel Martian opines, "On Mars we have a saying: Put your trust in the Gods but keep your bureaucrats and your broads at home!" Even assuming that this is heavy-handed tongue-in-cheek, that is indeed the message of the story and as such helps




REMEMBER WHEN DAYDREAMS AND FANTASIES WERE YOUR LAST PRIVATE REFUGE? THAT OF COURSE WAS BEFORE.....
THE DREAM POLICE!
O.K. BUD! YOU'RE UNDER ARREST FOR LEWD FANTASIES IN A PUBLIC PLACE!
BUT I'M ENTITLED TO HAVE SEXUAL FANTASIES !!! I'M AN ARTIST
YEAH?! WELL LET'S SEE YOUR PAPERS!!
!!! PAPERS?

turn the parodic thrust of the whole comic around 180 degrees. But if the best material in the issue skewers political intolerance and critiques the one-dimensionality of familiar cold war clichés, the worst ends up reproducing those clichés under the guise of streetwise sarcasm.

Larson's parting shot is that not only can't you trust those dirty commies but those women are just as bad. In other words, why have only one bogeyman when two will do?

Political satire is a tricky task, and I'm no stranger to the risks of using exaggeration to drive home subtle points, especially when satirizing people's sore spots. In fact I'm continually intrigued by work in that vein that toys with ambiguity to such a degree that it cuts both ways, i.e. isn't afraid to kid itself as it clouts its target. However, too much of the material in *Commies* settles for a mild ambivalence that doesn't carry much punch at all *or* (in the case of Larson and a one-pager by Shawn Kerry) actually bolsters the hawkish, xenophobic, tough-guy stance exemplified by the late John Wayne.

It's a shame, since John Pound's exquisite front cover painting is possibly the best of the year, and some moments inside, particularly Hansen's Philip K. Dickian farce, are well worth seeking out. But on the whole, *Commies from Mars* #2 eludes a full recommendation.

(Copies are available for $1.50 postpaid from Last Gasp, 2180 Bryant St., San Francisco, CA 94110. You must be eighteen or over to order.)

On a more positive note, I have no reservations about heartily recommending ***The Studio*** (14.95, 1979) published by Dragon's Dream. It is a handsome book, as you are no doubt aware if you've already noticed the excerpts from it here in this issue's Gallery Section. The book collects the drawings, paintings, and comic strips of Jeff Jones, Michael Kaluta, Barry Windsor-Smith, and Berni Wrightson, most of them produced while the four shared studio space in a large loft on West Twenty-sixth Street in Manhattan.

As explained by the somewhat overwritten biographical text woven between the pictures in the book, when the four began to share the studio in 1975 they had each gotten fed up with the world of straight comics and commercial art, where they had been making their livings. Smith's "Conan," Wrightson's "Swamp Thing," and Kaluta's "The Shadow" had been the best Marvel and DC comics of the modern era, combining good writing (by the likes of O'Neil and Wein at DC and Roy Thomas at Marvel) with superb mood-generating art.

That the straight comic mills were unable to create a convivial space for their best artists to feel rewarded and challenged enough to continue to produce further comic art merely points out the corporate malaise stalking their corridors.

Encouraged by each other's creativity after a period of readjustment, the four turned to watercolors and oils, concentrating on single paintings and illustrations. The impressive results are collected in *The Studio*.

A common element of the four artists' comic work had been their preference for evoking earlier eras. This continues in their paintings, which almost exclusively depict medieval, gothic, mythic, and anciently exotic scenes. In the nostalgic shadows of the *Studio* the twentieth century exists as some sort of bad rumor.

This is okay, I suppose, as long as the artists remember to look both ways before crossing the streets—horseless carriages *can* be sneaky.

All kidding aside, however, given the breakneck speed of modern culture, it is good that some artists look back to the work of Howard Pile and N.C. Wyeth, as well as to the Pre-Raphaelites and Viennese Secessionists. There was a beauty and dignity to the work of those artists that is in short supply today, and the best art in *The Studio* goes a long way toward replenishing that supply.

Since the publication of the book, the studio on West Twenty-sixth Street has disbanded, though the artists certainly will continue to create new art. I hope that part of their creative energy in the future finds its way back into the world of comic art, as the four have talents in that area that are only partially utilized in single paintings and drawings.

(*The Studio* is available from *Heavy Metal* Books, Dept. 480, 635 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022, for $14.95 plus $1.50 for postage and handling.)

YEAH, THERE'S A LOTTA FANTASY FREAKS POSIN' AS ARTISTS THESE DAYS AN' I WANNA SEE YOUR LICENSE TO PRACTICE.
LICENSE TO PRACTICE?
I'M GETTIN' OUTTA HERE!!
HALT!
I DON'T KNOW WHY BUT THEY FALL FOR THAT ONE EVERY TIME.
RIGHT THROUGH THE UPPER CORTEX AN' OUT THE PINEAL. NOW THAT'S WHAT I CALL ART.

ONLY THE PLITCH! by BILAL

ABOVE A SUBURB OF PARIS...
WE'RE APPROACHING, MR. PRESIDENT... BY NOW, THE CHIEF OF SECURITY MUST BE THERE...
...WITH, LET'S HOPE, A RATIONAL EXPLANATION FOR THIS.
FIRMIN, HOW IS YOUR WIFE FEELING AFTER THE BIRTH OF YOUR CHILD? WELL, I HOPE.
VERY WELL, MR. PRESIDENT... THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT... WE'RE ARRIVING, MR. PRESIDENT...
AH, HERE YOU ARE, MR. PRESIDENT!
WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE?
IT'S UNIMAGINABLE, MR PRESIDENT! IT GOES BEYOND ALL UNDERSTANDING! THE ENTIRE POPULATION OF GENNEVILLIERS HAS ACTUALLY DISAPPEARED!
INTO THIN AIR?
SO IT APPEARS..

YOU REALIZE, PRINCE, THAT WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD ME IS TOTALLY UNBELIEVABLE..
ALAS, MR. PRESIDENT... WE MUST YIELD TO THE EVIDENCE.. MY MEN HAVE SEARCHED THE CITY FROM TOP TO BOTTOM...IN VAIN ...THEY FOUND NOT EVEN A CAT!
...NOT EVEN A CAT. BUT ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE IS THIS STRANGE THING THAT WALKS AROUND ABOVE THE GROUND, MAKING A "PLITCH" NOISE WHEN ONE TOUCHES IT..
"PLITCH"?
YES, "PLITCH"!
PLITCH
!?
INDEED...
AT ANY RATE, PLITCH OR NO PLITCH, HAS THIS ANY CONNECTION WITH THIS.. COLLECTIVE DISAPPEARANCE..?
THANKS, FIRMIN!
IN MY OPINION, THERE IS NONE, MR. PRESIDENT. I THINK WE MUST LOOK TO THE OPPOSITION.. DON'T FORGET THAT BY TRADITION, GENNEVILLIERS LEAN FAR TO THE LEFT, POLITICALLY!

INDEED? WHAT DO YOU THINK THE OPPOSITION WOULD DO WITH THE POPULATION THAT IS ALREADY THEIRS? YOU'RE DIGRESSING, MY DEAR PRINCE.
HELLO
IN ANY CASE, THIS MATTER SEEMS GRAVE TO ME! WE MUST TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION! WE MUST CALL FOR A JOINT MEETING OF MINISTERS AND A TELEVISED STATEMENT. WE MUST GIVE A PUBLIC STATEMENT OUR FIRST PRIORITY! LET'S GO, MEN!
BUT WHAT EXACTLY SHOULD WE SAY, MISTER PRESIDENT?
A GOOD QUESTION!
WELL, WE CAN SAY THAT LET'S THINK A LITTLE.
PLITCH
WE CAN SAY THAT THEY ARE VICTIMS OF AN EPIDEMIC — NOT SERIOUS — THAT THE POPULATION OF GENNEVILLIERS IS FOR THE MOMENT UNDERGOING TREATMENT IN AN ALBANIAN CLINIC!
?
?
BUT WHY AN ALBANIAN CLINIC, MR. PRESIDENT?
WHY NOT?
INDEED.. WHY DID I SAY THAT? STRANGE...
PLITCH
THAT'S STRANGE, DON'T YOU THINK? AN ALBANIAN CLINIC ALBANIA — WHERE IS THAT, DO YOU KNOW?
IN CHINA OR SOMEPLACE LIKE THAT.
IN ANY CASE THEY MUST HAVE REALLY BUSY CLINICS THERE, HUH, PAPA? FULL OF GENNEVILLIERIAN PROLETARIATS!

AND THAT SAME NIGHT.
PLiiiiiiiiiTCHH
AT THE HOME OF THE PRESIDENT
DRIIIIII?!NI
...YES...?
WHAT? LYON, BORDEAUX, MARSEILLE!!
FRENCHWOMEN, FRENCHMEN! DESPITE THE EVIL THAT HAS SWEPT DOWN THESE LAST 48 HOURS ON OUR COUNTRY AND IMMOBILIZED 23 MILLION OF OUR COMPATRIOTS IN AN ALBANIAN CLINIC, WE MUST NOT LOSE OUR NATIONAL COMPOSURE, NOR CAN WE FORGET THE DEEP PATRIOTIC ROOTS THAT HAVE FORGED IN EACH OF US THE CAPACITY FOR...
PITCH

EIGHT DAYS LATER...
DEAR PARISIAN FRIENDS! AS YOU UNDOUBTEDLY KNOW, THE REST OF THE FRENCH POPULATION IS NOW UNDERGOING TREATMENT IN AN ALBANIAN CLINIC... THE GOVERNMENT AND MYSELF WILL SOON BE IN A POSITION TO FURNISH YOU...
WITH A RATIONAL EXPLANATION TO THIS DELICATE PROBLEM! THE SITUATION IS GRAVE, BUT IT IS NOT HOPELESS AND THE GOVERNMENT IS FIRMLY...
MR. PRESIDENT! DOWN THERE! THE THING THAT GOES "PLITCH"
ABZ
GARAGE
WELL, NEVER MIND THAT, PRINCE! FRANCE IS A DEMOCRATIC COUNTRY, AND THIS "PLITCH" IS WELCOME...

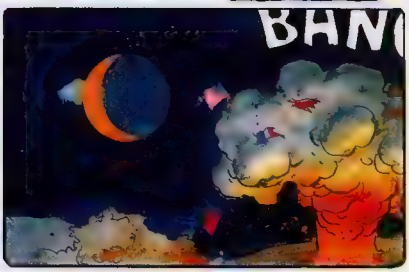
THREE SECONDS LATER...
PLIT
BUT!?
HEAVENS!
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?
MY GOD...
ALL GONE!
NO ONE'S LEFT!
NOT EVEN A CAT!
OH!
SHIT! THEY'RE ALL IN ALBANIA..
INDEED, SIRS! IT WAS DESTINED TO HAPPEN! WE ARE THE LAST AND ONLY PEOPLE IN FRANCE NOT TO BE TOUCHED BY THE MYSTERIOUS EPIDEMIC...
...THUS, I'VE DECIDED THAT WE WILL LEAVE TOMORROW FOR ALBANIA... THERE IS A TIME WHEN PEOPLE NEED THEIR LEADERS AND VICE VERSA! LET'S GO, SIR!
HERE, FIRMIN! I'M LEAVING YOU THE KEYS TO THE HOUSE AS WELL AS TO THE COUNTRY'S FUTURE...
THIS CONFIDENCE TOUCHES ME DEEPLY, MR. PRESIDENT!
hehehe THOSE WHO GET UP FROM THE TABLE LOSE THEIR PLACES.
6

THIS EPIDEMIC IS QUITE PROVIDENTIAL! IT KEEPS US FROM RUNNING ALL THE RISKS OF A CLASSIC COUP D'ETAT, WHICH IS ALWAYS HAZARDOUS! AT LAST WE ARE THE MASTERS OF THE COUNTRY! THIS AFTERNOON WE MUST HAVE A MEETING OF ALL AVAILABLE ROBOTS! I'M FORMING A NEW GOVERNMENT!
ha
hahaha
BUT THIS IS A COUNTRY AS EMPTY AS IT IS SILENT. A PALE SUN PAINFULLY RISES, SOON FOLLOWED BY A GIGANTIC PLITCH
COURAGE, MEN! COURAGE!
VIVE LA FRANCE!
WE'VE REACHED ITALY!
THE MOONLIGHT IS SPLENDID
WE'VE ARRIVED IN YUGOSLAVIA, MR. PRESIDENT, AND WE STILL HAVEN'T SEEN A SOUL! NOT EVEN A CAT! ISN'T THAT STRANGE?
STRANGE, YES. LIKE MANY THINGS IN THIS SITUATION...
WE'RE STARTING TO HAVE HEAVY LOSSES, MR. PRESIDENT... ALREADY THREE MINISTERS ARE DEAD FROM EXHAUSTION, AND ONE WHO WAS IN THE WAR...
WE'RE ARRIVING GENERAL. WE'RE ARRIVING!
OOH!

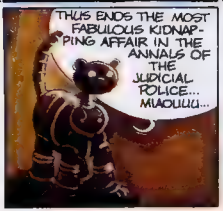
INDEED, THREE WEEKS LATER...
THERE! OVER THERE! THE CLINIC!
WHAT CAN I SAY?
UHFF... I'M DYING!
BRRRUM TAC TAC TAC TAC TAC
BANG BANG AHAH!
SCHBLAM
THINGS SEEM TO BE RATHER BAD HERE... WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, GENERAL?
WE MUST GO SEE WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, MR. PRESIDENT, IT'S OUR DUTY...
HEY!
DON'T ADVANCE THERE, I'VE JUST MINED THE TERRAIN!
HERE ARE REINFORCEMENTS, MEN! THE FRENCH ARE WITH US!

WELL, MY FRIEND, WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
THE WAR, OLD MAN! IT'S THE WAR!
A RED STRIKE, PROBABLY! WE WERE SHUT OUT! WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED THAT STORY ABOUT THE EPIDEMIC AND THE CLINIC WOULD TURN OUT TO BE NONSENSE? NOT EVEN A CAT WAS LEFT IN THE CLINIC WHEN WE GOT THERE... I SUPPOSE YOU CAME FOR THE SAME REASONS...
INDEED I...
IN FRONT THERE ARE RUSSIANS, CUBANS, AND THEIR FLUNKYS! THEY OF COURSE CLAIM THAT IT WAS US WHO MADE THE STRIKE! THEY ARE BLUFFING! THEY EVEN SAY THAT THEIR OWN POPULATIONS HAVE ALSO DISAPPEARED! BY GOD, THEY'LL PAY FOR THAT!!
TONIGHT, WE WILL ATTACK! YOU'RE STAYING WITH US?
CERTAINLY! MILITARY PASSIVITY IS THE SCLEROSIS OF PROGRESSIVIST NATIONS! FRANCE RECOGNIZES THAT! AND I HAVEN'T HAD THE CHANCE TO GO OUT ON A HUNT...
9

IT WAS A GLORIOUS EVENING!



THERE NO LONGER REMAINS EVEN A CAT ON EARTH, AND, AS IN FRANCE, ROBOTS ARE TAKING OVER THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. A GIGANTIC FLITCH HAS TAKEN ITS PRECIOUS HUMAN CARGO, FRUIT OF HIS EXTRAORDINARILY AUDACIOUS STRIKE, ON AN EPOCHAL JOURNEY THROUGH SPACE...



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AND THAT'S WHY I WAS SO NERVOUS. I DIDN'T KNOW THAT YOU WERE FRIENDS OF ROBSON'S. OBVIOUSLY MY FRIEND'S FRIENDS ARE MY FRIENDS.
THE FRIENDS OF YOUR FRIENDS. WELL, WHAT IDIOCY! I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANYTHING SO STUPID! EXCUSE ME, BUT YOU'RE THE FIRST MOLOSS I'VE EVER MET...
IT'S HARDLY SURPRISING. THERE ARE VERY FEW. IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THEM, IT'S NECESSARY TO KNOW THAT THEY HAVE ONLY ONE LAW: FIDELITY TO ONE MASTER, AND ONLY ONE. THE RESULT: THE PURPLE GUARD TRACKS, CAPTURES, AND DESTROYS THEM WITHOUT ANY KIND OF TRIAL...
YOU CAN'T DREAM OF ONE MORE FAITHFUL. THEIR FIDELITY IS JOINED TO THEIR BODIES LIKE HATE OR IDIOCY IS TO OTHERS. THEY ACCEPT SMALL HOUSEHOLD TASKS AS WELL, BUT MAKE ESPECIALLY SUPERB GUARDIANS, DEVOTED UNTIL DEATH!
THAT DOESN'T SURPRISE ME! WITH SUCH IDEAS...
THEY ARE SAID TO MAKE EXCELLENT COMPANIONS!
ONE CAN'T RECOVER ONE'S HEALTH.
THERE'S JUST ONE INCONVENIENCE: YOU HAVE TO LET THEM OUT TWO TIMES A DAY.
WHY?
TO PISS.

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